The London School of Economics and Political Science

Citizen Attitudes of Political Distrust: Examining Distrust through Technical, Ethical and Interest-Based Evaluations

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DECLARATION

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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I declare my thesis consist of 82,752 words.

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ABSTRACT

Citizen orientations towards their political leaders, institutions and political systems sits at the heart of political science and political behaviour, yet despite the potential challenges distrusting citizenries pose for the operation and stability of democratic systems, there has been no consensus on what political distrust really is, what it means for the citizens that express it, what its implications are for political systems and how to best capture it across established democracies. The dissonance between empirical observations of citizen distrusting attitudes and the analytical concepts used to study political orientations, which have mainly focused on trust, make this the right time to ask "What is political distrust?" and to investigate how this attitude area can help social scientists better understand current phenomena of political behaviour across democratic systems. This thesis postulates that we cannot conclusively interpret the significance of plummeting trust indicators nor apprehend their consequences for democratic politics without a clear understanding of citizens' political distrust, defined in its own right and separated from competing notions, such as cynicism or the lack of trust.

The thesis follows a mixed methodological approach to the study of political distrust from the perspective of citizens. It develops a conceptual model for distrusting political attitudes based on theoretical work and novel empirical evidence from three European democracies – Italy, the UK and Greece. Our model conceptualises political distrust as a dynamic, relational and evaluative attitude that follows technical, ethical and interest-based assessments to judge the untrustworthiness of political agents. Further, the thesis puts this conceptual model to the test, creating a novel survey indicator and providing new quantitative evidence regarding the structure and operation of political distrust. It finds support for our conceptualisation of distrusting attitudes as retrospective and prospective evaluative judgments and highlights the prominence of perceptions of unethical political conduct in shaping political distrust. Using a multiple-item indicator tapping into evaluations of national parliament and a citizen's preferred political party we explore the dimensionality and hierarchy of each evaluation and unravel a double operation of distrusting attitudes, both as specific assessments of political agents along these three dimensions and as a cognitive evaluative shortcut acting in a cyclical reinforcing manner. We also investigate how the newly identified aspects of political distrust relate to citizens' behavioural intentions for participating in politics and find differences in the motivating and demotivating influence of distrusting attitudes targeted at different parts of the political system.

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1.1 The puzzle of political distrust and motivation for the thesis

The concept of political trust has received considerable attention in the academic literature. Scholars have theorised about and empirically researched the benefits of citizens' trust in politicians, political institutions and governments since the 1960s. Theoretical accounts on the importance of political trust in democracies reach as far back as texts from classical Greece and the treatises of John Locke.[1] Political trust has been identified as a key component of diffuse support for democratic systems and is considered necessary for their survival (Easton, 1965; 1975; Norris, 2011; Braithwaite and Levi, 1998). Given its significance, political scientists have been using mass surveys and frequent polling to closely monitor citizen attitudes towards government, political institutions and the political system in general, first in the US and Britain, and subsequently across other European democracies. Yet, what we observe in most established democracies with more and more regularity are citizen attitudes towards politicians and institutions that can be best characterised as attitudes of distrust, not trust. One can easily notice such widespread negative orientations to politics across mass media, social media and critical commentaries of current affairs.[2] It is not only the recent financial meltdown that has triggered waves of protests across the US and Europe, nor the Euro-zone crisis that has strained citizens' support for their political systems in peripheral European countries. A wide range of phenomena, such as the London riots of 2011 or the rise in extreme-right voting and success of anti-systemic fringe parties throughout

[1] John Locke, "Second Treatise on Government" (1982) and the ''Anonymous Iamblichi'' (Gagarin and
[2] Some recent examples include the London riots of 2011 (Monde Diplomatique, 2012; Independent, 2012), the French and British student protests over policy and young people's hostile to political processes (The Conversation, 2014), the Indignados and other political movements in Spain interpreted as the manifestation of distrust in political elites (Good, 2014) and the 'We won't pay' anti-austerity movement (Guardian, 2011).

European countries, have been interpreted as manifestations of political distrust (Jennings and Stoker, 2015; Hartleb, 2015).

Survey trends also paint a rather negative picture. In the latest Eurobarometer survey conducted in May 2015, over 62% of all Europeans claim not to trust their national parliament and national government.[3] There are significant cross-country differences of course, but even among Scandinavian countries, around 30% of citizens claim not to trust their representative political institutions. A recent OECD report tracing the state of political trust among its 34 members also shows on average 60% of citizens distrust their political systems.[4] Similarly, in the US, 75% of Americans claim that they 'never' or 'only some of the time' trust their government to do what is right. Such negative responses have been the norm rather than the exception in the US since the 1970s, and negative trends have ensued in other established democracies.[5] Public and academic debate has focused largely on the interpretation of these trends and their implications for the health of democratic systems, bypassing the question of what political distrust really is and what it entails for citizens that express it.

Some scholars highlighted the prevalence of negative attitudes towards politics and people involved in government prior to the 1970s, even in nations considered to exhibit civic culture virtues (Hart, 1978; Norris 1999). A recent British study dedicated to negative citizen orientations replicated a question polled in 1944 and 1972, asking citizens whether they believed British politicians were out for themselves, their party or the good of the country (Jennings and Stoker, 2015). In 1944 only one in three respondents believed their politicians were doing what is best for the country, while 70 years later this ratio has shrunk to one in ten. The worsening image of politicians is evident, yet at the same time this early poll shows that two out of three people asked in 1944 still believed their politicians were either out for themselves or for their party, hardly a sturdy basis for a positive orientation towards those who legislate and govern.

[3] Eurobarometer 83 available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_arch_en.htm.
[4] OECD Restoring Trust in Government Forum, available at http://www.oecd.org/general/focus/focus-restoring-trust-in-government.htm.
[5] More than 50% of Americans have registered distrust towards their government since the 1970s, with only a brief period following the 9/11 terrorist attack on the US when distrust fell below 50%. For this reason a large amount of scholarly work on political trust, its erosion and the implications for the health of democratic polities appeared in the US in the beginning of the 1970s. For more information on single question trends see Gallop (http://www.gallup.com/poll/5392/trust-government.aspx) and the NES database (http://www.electionstudies.org/nesguide/toptable/tab5a_1.htm).

The purpose of this thesis is not to address the debate on the timing or extent of the rise in political distrust. Rather, it highlights a puzzle that results from the dissonance between empirical observations of citizen attitudes of distrust and the analytical concepts used to study attitudes towards politics, which have focused on trust. The fact that citizens express primarily negative affective and cognitive orientations towards the people that govern them, their political institutions and processes has been well documented and studied by a series of prominent scholars in the field (Norris, 2011; Dalton and Welzel, 2014; Nye, 1997; Crozier et al., 1975; Almond and Verba, 1980). This new pattern of political orientations has been assigned various labels, such as 'dissatisfied democrats' (Klingemann, 2014) 'critical citizens' (Norris, 1999; 2011) or 'emancipated citizens' (Welzel, 2007; 2013), emphasising critical attitudes combined with strong democratic values. Nevertheless, this field of research is still missing a clear conceptualisation of political distrust and systematic study of such attitudes as expressed by citizens in democratic contexts. We believe that the challenges posed by plummeting indicators of political trust and confidence cannot be fully understood nor accurately interpreted when 'political distrust' has not been conceptually defined in a clear way, distinguished from competing notions and studied in its own right.

The recent surge in theoretical and empirical work that attempts to conceptualise and understand negative citizen orientations, such as 'anti-politics' (Jennings and Stoker, 2015) or 'counter-democracy' (Rosanvallon, 2011), further showcases the need for a change of focus and for clearly delineated concepts in the study of citizen attitudes towards politics. In this context, the present thesis argues that given the prominence of distrusting attitudes in the realm of politics and the fundamental threat political distrust may pose to democratic governance and stability, this is the right time to ask: "What is political distrust?" In this sense, we claim that we do not really know how citizens think about or express their distrust in politics, how they judge the untrustworthiness of political agents and whether different political objects are evaluated along similar lines. Finally, we ask whether different evaluations of untrustworthiness can illuminate the function of distrust, its association to other key political attitudes and its consequences for political behaviour.

An additional piece of the puzzle for the study of political distrust stems from the above mentioned survey indicators and polls, which have been providing a wealth of empirical evidence on citizen attitudes across countries spanning decades. These measures have been

used as indicators of 'trust in government' or 'political trust' and lower values have been assumed to reflect distrusting attitudes. However, this approach has raised question marks and has given rise to diverse criticisms on both sides of the Atlantic. When a citizen claims she only trusts the government to do what is right "some of the time", is it a true indication that she distrusts her government and the system of governance? Or when citizens report that they "tend not to trust" their national parliament, should this be interpreted as an expression of distrust towards parliament? Indeed, scholars such as Margaret Levi and Laura Stoker have highlighted that "we have yet to question whether all of this research is really about trust" (200: 483), referring in particular to the American National Election Study questions used as the 'trust in government' indicator; others have questioned whether such measures can provide an indication of distrusting citizen attitudes (Cook and Gronke, 2005; Miller, 1974a, 1974b; Larry, 2002; Stokes, 1962). Similar limitations have plagued indicators that aim to capture trust and distrust 'by intuition', that is, by asking survey respondents how much they trust various political institutions, essentially leaving trust and distrust open to the interpretation of each individual citizen. These approaches are suitable for monitoring trends and comparing levels of 'trust' across time, but unfortunately, they tell us very little about citizens' rationale for distrust and the kinds of evaluations they follow when judging political agents to be untrustworthy (Fisher et al., 2010; Mishler and Rose, 1997).

These debates have yet to be conclusively resolved, yet the widespread utilisation of such indicators in political research (this thesis is no exception, having already used such data for motivating reasons) and empirical studies of effects and determinants of political distrust has left a perceptible gap in the field. This gap concerns the nature of the concept of political distrust, its meaning and the underlying evaluations entailed in a distrusting judgment. For all the empirical analyses carried out, there is still no comprehensive conceptual account of citizens' political distrust that scholars agree upon. On the contrary, the notion of political distrust has been conflated with other concepts, such as 'cynicism' or 'lack of trust', resulting in a contested term. We believe this is the right time to take a step back, rethink the conceptual status of political distrust, examine the nature of distrusting attitudes and contribute to the existing literature. To this end, the present study focuses on political distrust and aims to address some of the fundamental questions about this type of citizen orientations.

Finally, the third piece of the puzzle this thesis has identified in the study of distrust stems from the ambivalent scholarly stance towards the relationship between political distrust and

political trust, and especially distrust and the lack of trust. This ambivalence relates to the two points mentioned above about the limitations in interpreting and understanding the phenomenon of distrusting attitudes in modern democracies without a clear conceptualisation of political distrust. The relationship between trust, the lack of trust and distrust is not a minute etymological detail. It is important both conceptually and empirically. Equating the lack of trust with distrust is equivalent to equating 'something' with the 'absence of something else' and assumes trust and distrust are symmetrical notions. In less abstract terms, this research affirms that political distrust denotes citizens' negative expectations relating to interactions with political agents. Negative expectations are by definition 'something', which can and should be explored in more depth, and hence cannot be assumed to signify the 'lack of something'. If we take attitudes of trust to encapsulate positive expectations citizens formulate in response to political agents, then the lack of trust is the absence of such positive expectations. And similarly, lack of distrust should denote the absence of negative expectations. In some cases, political scientists have attempted to distinguish between the three states conceptually and empirically by examining the possibility of skeptical citizens, unconvinced citizens or citizens that both trust and distrust political agents, yet these distinctions did not give rise to studies dedicated to the exploration of distrusting attitudes (Cook and Gronke, 2005; Levi and Stoker, 2000; Braithwaite and Levi, 1998).

Recent advances in evolutionary biology, neurobiology and psychology investigating the roles of trust and distrust in human behaviour further support this argument and provide motivation for the need to examine these concepts separately. Studies in neurobiology have shown that trust and distrust are associated with completely different neurotransmitters in the human brain, operating through different mechanisms and motivating different behaviours (Zak et al., 2005; Fehr, 2009).[6] From this alternative scientific perspective of human behaviour we learn that the experience and implications of distrust are particular to that state and cannot be understood simply as the lack of trust. Furthermore, work carried out as part of this thesis on distrusting attitudes in the realm of politics brought to light the particular psychological and emotive state citizens manifest when they distrust political actors and

[6] According to a series of replicated experimental studies with human subjects, the experience of trust and reciprocation of trusting attitudes triggers oxytocin in the human brain, a hormone that boosts pleasant feelings, the release of dopamine and tips humans towards cooperation, affiliation, attachment and willingness to bear risk. Distrust is associated with a higher level of cortisol, the activation of the amygdala part of the brain through fear and release of stress hormones. Male participants also experience an increase of dihydrotestosterone (DHT), a bioactive metabolite of testosterone that increases the desire for physical confrontation. For more information about neurobiology research on trust and distrust see Kosfeld et al., (2005).

institutions. Expressions of extreme distrust entail the anticipation of harmful outcomes from interactions with political agents, triggering feelings of anger, fear and insecurity and an attempt to shield one's self from vulnerability by not engaging in any form of citizen-state interactions. We argue that such reactions are particular to distrusting attitudes, that they are significant for better understanding citizens' political behaviour and should not be overlooked by political attitude research.

Structuring theoretical and empirical work solely around the concept of political trust has resulted in much scholarly confusion and a dissonant tool to study actual citizen attitudes towards political systems, which are based on negative affective and cognitive orientations. Scientific understanding of citizen actions such as abstention, anti-systemic party voting, protest, support or opposition to government policies or support for political alternatives to representative democracy can benefit from a clear conceptual account of political distrust. We therefore summarise the arguments motivating the present thesis as follows: increasingly, observations of citizen attitudes in Western democracies point to negative orientations and distrust towards politicians, institutions and political processes. The most widely used theoretical and empirical tools available to study these trends are not appropriate: they are not tailored to investigate the concept of distrust and cannot tell us what citizens are thinking about when they express political distrust. We believe political distrust is an attitude that entails specific evaluations and further, that these evaluative dimensions can provide important insights into the operation of distrust and its role for democratic citizenries.

This thesis tackles an ambitious and multi-faceted research question: 'What is political distrust?' Specifically, it aims to address the nature of political distrust by exploring the meaning citizens attach to such attitudes and the way they express distrust towards their political system. Defining distrust as an attitude, this thesis proceeds to investigate its underlying evaluative dimensions, its internal structure and operation in terms of related notions and measures of political behaviour and how citizens make sense of their decisions to distrust politicians or political institutions. After providing a conceptual model of political distrust grounded in theoretical arguments and citizen-centred empirical evidence, the thesis also seeks to capture distrusting attitudes using a novel survey measure. This additional empirical evidence allows us to investigate the dimensionality of distrust and determine how its different components are associated with other attitudinal and behavioural variables of interest.

1.2 A problem of definition: Theoretical framework and review of current research

Many scholars have highlighted the theoretical importance of political and institutional trust for the effective governance and legitimacy of democratic regimes (Gambeta et al., 1988; Miller, 1974a; Hetherington, 1998; Gibson and Caldeira, 1995; Inglehart, 1999; Warren, 1999). Empirical studies have linked trust with law compliance and support for governmental policies, while distrust has been associated with anti-systemic party voting, electoral abstention, protest and political disaffection (Hetherington, 2005; Schul et al., 1998; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005; Peterson and Wrighton, 1998; Rosanvallon, 2008). Scholarly interest in political trust and distrust reaches back to Easton's influential distinction between *specific* and *diffuse* support, which identified political trust as a component of diffuse democratic support (Easton 1965, 1975). According to the Eastonian model, diffuse support is necessary for institutional legitimacy; it is what arms citizens with a 'reservoir of good-will' towards the political regime that can sustain it throughout times of poorer performance. Similarly, in their study of civic culture, Almond and Verba (1963, 1980) consider an allegiant or positively oriented citizenry towards political agents to be an integral part of civic culture that is conducive to effective and stable democratic governance.

Nevertheless, the political trust literature has been ambiguous in its approach to political distrust. According to work on system support and political culture, distrust of political institutions is inimical to democracy, as it inhibits voluntary compliance with legislation and cooperation between citizens and political agents. Yet there have also been scholarly efforts to give political distrust the role of guardian of democracy. Some scholars have developed an understanding of 'liberal distrust' as necessary for the healthy functioning of political institutions, following a tradition from Locke to Madison, which calls citizens to be suspicious and vigilant towards people in a position of power and institutions, since they could be used to serve interests other than those of the community (Hardin, 2004; Pettit, 1997; Skinner, 1995). However, for the purposes of current research in political distrust we argue that this 'liberal distrust' does not correspond to the phenomenon of political distrust observed in established democracies, which already have in place such monitoring institutions, controls of government actions and working constitutions the liberal democratic theory suggests. The

idea of 'liberal distrust' is motivated by the need for vigilance, but at the same time demands the existence and flourishing of trust in a political community in order to achieve collective goods and effective governance (Lenard, 2008). We therefore believe that citizen attitudes of distrust towards their politicians and institutions can be a cause for concern in democratic communities, following the theoretical framework of studies in system support.

Still, political distrust has often been conflated with political cynicism and alienation (Abramson, 1983). Miller wrote that political distrust or cynicism "refers to the degree of negative affect toward the government and is a statement of the belief that the government is not functioning and producing outputs in accord with individual expectations" (1974a: 952). His definition was criticised for not distinguishing between the disapproval of specific incumbent authorities and a diffuse attitude of dwindling support for democratic governance, giving rise to lengthy subsequent debates (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974b; Norris, 1999; Cook and Gronke, 2005). It also led a group of scholars to focus on the target of citizens' negative orientations and question whether the increase in levels of political distrust stems from an increase in citizens' democratic expectations (Klingemann, 2014). Higher democratic aspirations and the rise of a critical citizenry should benefit democracies, and despite the fact that this leads citizens to report lower levels of trust and lower satisfaction with the way democracy functions in their country, these scholars argue that there is no systemic trend that shows eroding support for democracy as a regime (Norris, 1999, 2011; Nye et al., 1997). Nevertheless, these debates have resurfaced and the role of political distrust in democratic societies is far from having been put to rest. The role of citizen aspirations and the changes in the environment of political information further complicate the study of political distrust, but we argue that decreasing trends of political trust cannot inform us further about what is happening at the citizen level, the evaluations entailed in citizen judgments, their implications and whether they indeed reflect political 'distrust'. In their review of research on political trust and trustworthiness, Margaret Levi and Laura Stoker (2000) urged researchers to re-evaluate their concepts and measures, yet despite the prominent place of political distrust attitudes in current research, there has not yet been a systematic examination of what citizens mean when they 'distrust their political institutions' (Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2014; Catterberg and Moreno, 2005; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012).

The theoretical framework for approaching political distrust as an individual level attitude has again been informed by the study of trust. Hardin (1993, 2004) formulated a rational-strategic

approach to trust and expanded this to encompass distrust as a tripartite relation: A (dis)trusts B to do X. This conceptual understanding of trust and distrust as 'encapsulated interest' maintains that individual trusters rationally calculate the possibility of their own interest being encapsulated in the interest of the trusted. That is, I will trust or distrust you if I have reason to believe that "you have an interest to attend to *my* interests because, typically, you want our relationship to continue" (Hardin, 2004: 5). This strategic approach has influenced the way scholars have thought about citizen attitudes of political trust, reflecting a calculation of the possibility political agents will act in a benefiting manner (Gambetta, 1988; Hetherington, 2005; Fisher et al., 2010). Despite the heavy burden of knowledge and information requirement this approach places on citizens and the inability to distinguish between reasons for withholding trust or extending distrust, subsequent studies have attempted to identify what citizens could perceive as their own 'interest'. They have often focused on performance-based measures of government, especially as economic output, but also other policy domains such as control of crime, international affairs and security.

However, a large body of work on political trust and distrust goes beyond the strategic calculation entailed in citizens' evaluations. Scholars point to the ability of trust to solve problems of collective action, which goes against the standard understanding of narrow self-interest (Levi, 1997; Tyler, 1998). In this approach, trust is considered to make a normative claim based on shared moral values, good intentions and ethical reciprocity, whereas distrust is found to inhibit the formation of such shared norms (Blackburn, 1998; Fenton, 2000; Uslaner, 2002). The idea of trust as a 'moralistic worldview' has also been developed in individual-level research that focuses on the psychological traits or personal characteristics that encourage people to trust both horizontally (inter-personal) and vertically (political and institutional). This approach emphasises the way in which early socialisation and first experiences help to create a circle of trust, whereby placing trust in other people has been reciprocated resulting in positive outcomes that further enhance a view of the world as a safe and benign place. In a circle of distrust, on the other hand, trusting relations are unable to flourish, or are met with disappointment and betrayal, forging a view of the world as a malevolent and dangerous environment. The body of literature focusing on interpersonal relationships and the development of social capital in political communities does not provide a convincing theoretical or empirical link to examine political distrust and the arrow of causality can easily be understood to run either way (Hardin, 2004; Cook et al., 2005; Fukuyama, 2014). Discussions about the role of social capital and interpersonal relations are

outside the scope of this thesis, as it is specifically aimed at unravelling citizen attitudes of distrust towards political agents, yet we do consider some of the conceptual and empirical insights from this literature in our effort to understand citizen judgments and to definite the concept of political distrust.

From the aforementioned approaches we recognise the important role that experiences can play in fostering attitudes of trust and distrust, as well as the necessity that political distrust must entail aspects additional to the calculation of performance evaluation or encapsulated interest. Furthermore, we also highlight the need for a conceptual approach to political distrust that separates it from the lack of trust. We know that distrusting judgments entail a certain degree of vulnerability and risk in relation to a political agent (Scheidegger and Staerklé, 2011; Marková and Gillespie, 2008), and although they might be a normatively appropriate response in cases of untrustworthy political agents, they set in motion an elaborate cognitive and behavioural response mechanism that researchers are still investigating (Marien and Hooghe, 2013; Schul et al., 2008; Tyler, 2006). Recent advances in social psychology and neurobiology have brought to light links between distrusting or trusting states with emotive and cognitive responses that motivate human behaviour (Zak et al., 2005; Merolla et al., 2013; Yamagishi et al., 1998; Fehr, 2009; Lu, 2014). What Margaret Levi called "lack of trust, in the sense of standing back and failing to trust until given sufficient evidence or reasons for trusting" (1998: 96) has a different meaning and behavioural implications than distrust.

As a final note, the empirical study of political distrust has been further complicated due to the separate paths taken by macro and micro-level research. Judgments of distrust have often been approached by analysing the trustworthy qualities of the political targets, macro-level characteristics of the political regime, such as government and economic performance, institutional characteristics and political culture theories (Nye et al., 1997; Hooghe, 2011, Newton, 1999; Mishler and Rose, 1997). At this point it is important to note that although 'untrustworthiness' and 'distrust' are conceptually distinct, empirical research shows most citizens refer to 'untrustworthy politics' when giving their account of political distrust. Untrustworthiness and trustworthiness are attributes of the political object being evaluated – not of citizens – yet individuals decide to distrust based on their *perception* of untrustworthiness. Studies that focus on the variation of distrust levels across national borders and across time are informative and theoretically significant for precisely such purposes: understanding the variations we observe at the national level, identifying national experiences

or institutional characteristics that contribute to perceptions of political untrustworthiness and testing macro-level theories about its determinants. However, these studies are unable to investigate the individual-basis for political distrust. Distrust is an attitude of negative orientation towards one's political system, which is formed and expressed by each individual citizen. If we are to address the question of what political distrust really is, what it means and how it functions for citizens, we need to redirect our focus from the macro-level characteristics of institutional (un)trustworthiness towards individual perceptions and evaluations.

1.3 Summary of case selection and methodology

The research design of the thesis follows a mixed methodological approach in order to address the substantive questions that relate to the meaning and functioning of political distrust attitudes for citizens. A sequential mixed methods design allows the incorporation of findings from exploratory research into the conceptualisation of political distrust and subsequent data collection and quantitative analysis of distrusting attitudes. Relying solely on quantitative survey data for this study would not have allowed the researcher to investigate the meaning and conceptual status of political distrust. Existing survey indicators are responsible for a large part of the current confusion and gaps in the social scientific understanding of this attitude area. In this case, the appropriate methodological approach is empirical qualitative research tailored to address questions of meaning and able to access people's evaluative frameworks. Recognising the strengths of this research approach is as important as acknowledging its limitations in addressing the subsequent goals of the thesis: to examine the structure and functioning of distrusting attitudes. The overarching research question of the thesis renders qualitative and quantitative evidence necessary, and the chosen sequential mixed methods research design provides stronger support for the conceptual model of political distrust proposed in the thesis.

The first part of the research strategy consists of an exploratory study of political distrust attitudes through popular narrative interviews. The collection and thematic analysis of empirical qualitative evidence provides a fitting approach to access the meaning citizens attach to distrusting attitudes, the language used to express distrust and the evaluations they

use to explain their distrust to a third party. It allows the researcher to identify common themes and patterns in the underlying evaluative dimensions employed by citizens, while at the same time remaining open to the possibility of discovering new aspects of this attitude area that have been overlooked or run against assumptions made in the relevant literature. Findings from this part of the research are used, in conjunction with theoretical knowledge about citizens' political attitudes, to formulate a conceptual model for citizen attitudes of political distrust. Our conceptual model marks a contribution to the field of research and captures the dynamic, reciprocal and evaluative aspects of political distrust, specifically citizen assessments of technical, moral and incongruent political conduct.

The purpose of case selection for this part of the research concerns: (a) countries where interviews were conducted; and (b) participants that were interviewed. Three countries were selected in order to obtain empirical evidence not solely confined to one individual political culture and national context that could lead to a conceptualisation of distrusting attitudes, which could potentially travel across national borders (albeit with the caveat that the initial focus was placed on established European democracies). Our aim was, firstly, to conduct research in countries where attitudes of political distrust are commonplace. Given our goal of conceptualising political distrust, being able to find expressions of distrust in the population was a necessary requirement. Secondly, it was important for the empirical data to be gathered from national contexts experiencing different political developments, with diverse historical trajectories and institutional set ups, but belonging to the relatively homogenous group of established democracies. This helps boost the generalisability of findings beyond the three national contexts of the thesis while maintaining the relevance of our analysis to citizen attitudes of political distrust in the context of established democracies. Greece, Italy and the UK were chosen as suitable countries to conduct narrative interviews and a diversified participant group was recruited in each nation, based on citizens' geographical residence, age and socioeconomic status (N=48). We provide more information regarding the national contexts where research was conducted, as well as the recruitment process and details of interview participants in Chapter 3.

Findings from the analysis of narrative interviews inform our conceptual model of political distrust that is advanced throughout the thesis. This model also provides the basis for the operationalisation and measurement of political distrust attitudes through a novel indicator, included in a dedicated online survey in the UK (N=785). We use this original survey data to

explore the internal structure of distrusting attitudes as they are captured by the new multiple items, and to supplement or revise the conceptual model of political distrust through quantitative data analysis. We further examine how the different aspects of distrusting attitudes interact with other individual-level attitudes, such as political cynicism, efficacy or knowledge in an effort to unravel some of the existing conundrums regarding the association of political attitudes. Similarly, we take advantage of the subcomponents of distrusting attitudes captured through the multiple item indicator and re-examine the effect of distrust on citizens' behavioural intentions. The link between distrust and political participation has also been contested in theoretical and empirical studies, and our aim is to contribute to these debates with novel evidence more detailed analysis.

This part of the study provides the opportunity to carry out statistical analysis that further adds to our understanding of the underlying structures and functions of political distrust attitudes and brings new evidence based on an empirically grounded conceptual model of citizens' distrust. For the purposes of the study we opted for an online survey design that allows the inclusion of a more diverse sample of respondents than the widely used college or university student samples in similar studies of political attitudes. We carried out this part of the research in the UK (using a specialised online survey provider) as one of the original national contexts studied in the earlier part of the research. Although the quantitative data are derived from a single national context, we believe they provide a meaningful contribution to the analysis of political distrust and further studies can easily reproduce our research and expand on it on various directions.

1.4 Main findings and contribution of the thesis

The current thesis tackles the puzzle of political distrust by addressing the nature and functioning of distrusting attitudes. It affirms that distrust should be separated from trust in the study of political attitudes and contributes to the current scholarly work with a study that defines and examines political distrust in its own right. Further, it follows a micro-level perspective, focusing on the meaning and operation of distrusting attitudes for individual citizens. Macro-level studies that examine the role of institutional and other systemic characteristics for political distrust can provide informative cross-national comparisons and test theories regarding institutional effects. Nevertheless, they are not able to address the

question of what really constitutes political distrust and how it varies between individuals. Ultimately, political distrust is an attitude, and as such it is inevitably attached to the individual that formulates it in response to some aspect of her world (Krech and Crutchfield, 1948). We therefore offer an individual-level study that emphasises the role of personal evaluations and perceptions of the political system that shape distrusting attitudes. We argue that unlocking the underlying evaluations on which distrust is based is the best way to answer the key questions surrounding the ontological status of political distrust. These two approaches, individual-level and distrust-focused, inform the research design of the thesis, resulting in the collection of original empirical evidence of citizens' distrusting political attitudes. This methodological approach constitutes a further novelty in the study of political distrust, which for the most part has rested on either conceptual work or the analysis of existing survey data. The research design is of course necessitated by the key questions this thesis set out to address. Empirical qualitative evidence is collected to tackle the puzzle of meaning in expressions of political distrust and to examine the evaluative processes entailed in distrusting attitudes. The analysis of quantitative data based on this conceptual model of political distrust reveals the internal structure of such attitudes and the way this structure relates to intentions of political participation.

The first contribution of the thesis is a conceptual model of political distrust attitudes derived from the analysis of popular interview narratives in three European democracies. Our research showed that the underlying meaning of political distrust as expectation of negative outcomes and the evaluative dimensions entailed in distrusting attitudes followed the same patterns across the three national contexts studied. Based on this evidence we formulate a model of political distrust that can be used as a map for further study. This model conceptualises political distrust as a relational and dynamic attitude. Relational, in the sense that it is developed between the citizen and her political system, and is hence based on evaluations and perceptions derived from interactions with political agents. We argue that these evaluations entailed in distrusting attitudes run along three main lines: evaluations of technical incompetence and inability to fulfil political roles; evaluations of political conduct that is morally wrong, unjust or produces unfair outcomes; and evaluations of diverging interests between the citizen and political agents, that is the perception that the best-interest of the citizen is not in line with the interests pursued by the political system. These three underlying aspects of political distrust can vary in their role and significance among different

individuals, different occasions and in judging different parts of the political system. Yet we find they are omnipresent in some combination in expressions of distrusting attitudes.

We also conceptualise distrust as dynamic, meaning that it entails a retrospective and prospective temporal dimension. Evaluations of untrustworthy political conduct are based on perceptions of past events, interactions and information related to the citizen's political life, as well as on calculations regarding future outcomes and expectations. This dynamic aspect allows citizens to consider new evidence and information when formulating perceptions and expectations of political untrustworthiness given any change in circumstances. In this way attitudes of distrust are built over the citizen's political life experience, but are also responsive to political performance and political changes. Past evaluations of political untrustworthiness undoubtedly influence future expectations, yet we argue that the two time projections tap into slightly different aspects of distrusting attitudes. Retrospective evaluations are grounded more strongly in current and past perceptions of political conduct, whereas prospective evaluations entail a bigger role for citizens' belief in the political system and the political agents.

Further, we find that political distrust functions in a cyclical, self-fulfilling manner through a psychological state and behavioural intentions that reinforce distrust. Established attitudes of distrust denote expectations of negative outcomes from interactions with political actors, and therefore citizens seek to protect themselves by ceasing cooperation and removing themselves from the citizen-state relationship. If a citizen perceives politicians and political institutions to be untrustworthy, distrust appears as the only rational approach to protect oneself. In turn, distrusting citizens can become themselves untrustworthy citizens, attempting to evade the state, establishing alternative networks for cooperation, resisting government action or policy implementation and ceasing to participate in a way that enhances democratic politics. The state of distrust is associated with a psychological state of insecurity and alertness due to the risk entailed in operating under an untrustworthy political system. We find that when addressed at specific political actors distrust is accompanied by emotive responses of anger, disappointment and disgust. These emotive responses are important aspects of distrust because emotions are increasingly recognised as action motivators. For example, anger towards a political party or political institution you perceive to be untrustworthy can have a mobilising effect for protesting or supporting political alternatives. At the same time, distrust that builds up and affects the entire political system is associated

with a state of anxiety, fear and even despair, which are equally important emotive states for political behaviour.

Although political distrust stems from evaluations of political agents, it builds up and spills over from one part of the political system to another. The precise point where spill-over occurs is difficult to identify, as it appears to be different for each individual. For example, for some citizens in the UK, the parliamentary expenses scandal reinforced their view of the political class as 'out-of-touch' and 'out-for-themselves' without a willingness to address the real problems of the country, and this was projected onto the entire political system. For others these evaluations were confined to the specific individual politicians who misbehaved, were caught and disciplined and the operation of the controlling mechanisms ring-fenced the trustworthiness of the system. Similarly, for some citizens their perception of a manipulation offensive surrounding the Iraq war was strong enough to stain the normative standing of all British politicians, while for others it was confined to Tony Blair and the New Labour administration. We therefore also find evidence of political distrust acting as a cognitive heuristic mechanism and spilling over to colour subsequent evaluations of political agents and different parts of the political system.

The second contribution of this thesis is a novel operationalisation of political distrust based on the conceptual model developed, which provides a measurement tool and original survey data on distrusting attitudes. The multiple item indicator of political distrust includes items that touch on the three evaluative dimensions for each time projection mentioned above, targeting two parts of the political system: the institution of national parliament, as an institutional actor that symbolises representative democracy, that encompasses all legislative processes, all elected political parties and the national political class and that produces democratic outputs. Negative evaluations of this institution provide a good indicator for attitudes towards the political system, although we discuss possible variations in the way citizens interpret the role of national parliament. We also include evaluations of another political agent that provides a more demanding test for distrusting attitudes in our measure. Half of the new items tap into evaluations of the political party citizens are closest to, support or prefer compared to all other political groups. Conceptually, asking citizens whether they perceive their preferred political party to be untrustworthy traces the lowest possible edge of political distrust, as the party one prefers represents the part of their political system they would distrust the least. Our finding that many citizens' evaluations continue to be negative

across all items makes a stronger case for the predominance of politically distrusting attitudes. It could be possible – although less likely – for some citizens to hold more negative evaluations of their preferred political party, and by consequence all political parties in the system, than of the institutions and processes of the political system. We do not find any evidence for this pattern of evaluations in our sample and would argue that distrust in political parties, and particularly in a citizen's preferred party, can only be a bad omen for attitudes towards the democratic system, which is built on the premise of representation and elections. If political distrust is not extended to political institutions, it is arguably a matter of time before citizens' reservoir of good-will runs out and they begin to perceive political processes as equally untrustworthy.

This new indicator contributes to the empirical analysis of distrusting attitudes with original survey data from the UK and offers the opportunity to explore the conceptual model of distrust from an additional angle. We investigate the internal structure of the evaluative dimensions, map how respondents approach different evaluative items and assess the contribution of this approach for examining how distrust can influence political behaviour. We find, as expected, that evaluations of national parliament are on average more negative than the political party citizens consider closest to them. Evaluations of the two agents are not ordered in the same way for all respondents, which would have indicated that negative judgments of one's preferred party capture more distrust in the political system. These findings already suggest the two political objects may tap into different aspects of distrusting attitudes, may be influenced by external stimuli in different ways and may play different roles in motivating political behaviour. Further, this difference is not only due to perceptions of diverging interests, but equally of evaluations that have to do with competence and normative commitments. The theoretical approach to distrust as a calculation of encapsulated interest has guided much of the conceptual work in the field, but what we find throughout our analyses is the prominent role of prospective normative evaluations in decisions of distrust. The interview evidence highlights the importance of citizen perceptions of fairness, fair play and ethical norms for distrust in all political agents, while the survey analysis suggests perceptions of unethical political conduct are prominent components and better placed to capture strong attitudes of political distrust. We hope that further research with data from additional national contexts could provide comparisons for the identified structure and associations we find between the evaluative items.

Using the multiple items indicator we can disentangle the notion of political distrust little by little and map its structure and operations. We find that all of the identified evaluative dimensions are part of a single underlying concept of distrust and can be considered as indispensable components of distrusting attitudes. We also find that citizens resort to retrospective assessments of untrustworthiness as much as they formulate prospective expectations for political conduct, although beliefs about future conduct are consistently less negative than those of the past. This difference may reflect genuine political changes, such as replacement of politicians, newly introduced processes or reforms. However, we argue that the due to the timing of our data collection and the consistency in these disparities, which hold for all types of evaluations and political targets and for all subgroups in our study, including the most cynical individuals, can be better understood in terms of a basic psychological tendency and prospective assessments tapping more strongly into the level of one's faith about future political conduct and institutional performance. Maintaining some degree of hope and the belief in a more favourable future – or at least no worse than past indicators would suggest – also emerges across some narratives of political distrust.

This would constitute an encouraging interpretation of our results for the possibility of remedying distrusting relations, at least within the UK national context. If citizens are still ready to formulate expectations of political conduct that are less negative than past evaluations would suggest and despite instances of being let down, it means that politicians and institutional structures can combat distrust by promoting political conduct that is in line with communal norms of fairness and competent governance. Diverging interests, or the perception that the best-interest of the citizen will not be disregarded by politicians, is also an integral part of distrusting attitudes, though not central in motivating intentions of abstaining or voting for an extreme party in elections, or even moving away from the country. It is easier for citizens to register negative evaluations of national parliament based on diverging interests, but such perceptions alone are not detrimental to the citizen-state relation, through the encouragement of disruptive types of political behaviour. On the contrary, it can even motivate active participation in politics, voicing citizen concerns and engaging in the political process. However, negative interest-based evaluations of one's preferred party have the potential to damage the link between the citizen and democratic representative processes and to weaken one's resolve to participate in a constructive manner.

An additional key finding of this thesis concerns roles different aspects of distrusting attitudes can play in citizens' reaction to politics. Above, we commented briefly on the particular emotional responses and psychological states associated with political distrust, as well as the advances of research in political psychology that highlight the effect emotional-psychological states have on citizen's behaviour. We further find that negative evaluations of the political party one considers closest to them act in a demotivating fashion and lead citizens to think less about actively participating in politics through existing avenues and political groups. Such attitudes also help us better understand the decision to abstain in an election. Both retrospective and prospective negative evaluations of the political party citizens consider closest to their preferences should make it harder for them to lend their support to that party on election day; this increases the incentives for abstention and in this instance past evidence of untrustworthy political conduct is more informative for citizens' intention to abstain. At the same time, radical or extreme-party voting, which has attracted considerable attention due to prominent and considerable electoral gains across European democracies, is also linked to political distrust.

The conventional wisdom posits that increased distrust will either lead citizens to abstention or to the support of radical and anti-systemic parties. We add two points to this discussion. Firstly, that some evaluative dimensions of distrusting attitudes are more central than others in motivating such considerations. Secondly, that distrust in one's preferred political party is a better predictor for considerations to abstain, whereas distrust of national parliament provides a stronger basis for the motivation to vote for an extreme or radical party. This finding is in line with what the academic community knows about radical parties; they seldom make up a large part of parliament and usually present themselves through anti-systemic and populist language that distances them from the political establishment. On the most extreme end of behavioural intentions we have identified the wish to sever completely the relationship between the citizen and the untrustworthy political system. Moving away from the country provides an opportunity for citizens to no longer be affected by their political system, but we find that such considerations are motivated by distrusting attitudes that go beyond one's preferred party and are directed towards the wider political system, in particular negative institutional evaluations regarding past and future competent and ethical conduct.

These findings pertain to some of the behavioural intentions that we begin to identify in the first stage of our research into distrusting attitudes and investigate further in the latter part of our analysis. They offer initial evidence that in some cases distrust, and not trust, is more informative as a political attitude to understand citizens' behavioural intentions, such as in the case of electoral abstention and active political participation. Furthermore, distrust targeted at different parts of the political system (partisan or institutional actors) can have different motivating influences. Evidence suggests that the former proves motivating for active political engagement through political organisations, interest groups and activism, while the latter appears to be motivating for types of behaviour that disrupt democratic political processes. Considering these differences can help us make further contributions to the debates on the role of political distrust for participation and democratic political behaviour.

Finally, the thesis contributes to the academic study of political distrust by addressing the issue of dimensionality, both conceptually and empirically. We believe that a considerable part of the scholarly debates surrounding political distrust and conflicting research findings have emerged as a result of a double function of attitudes of political distrust. We argue that political distrust can and should be understood as a unified concept. We find consistent evidence that all evaluative dimensions tap into the same latent trait of political distrust, despite certain differences in the responses registered along retrospective or interest-based evaluations. All citizens tend to assess the untrustworthiness of political targets across evaluative dimensions and time-projections in a consistent manner. There is no evidence of any respondent group that systematically provides very negative evaluations along certain lines and very positive evaluations along others. Evaluations of different political agents, usually along different evaluative dimensions, move in tandem.

At the same time, we find that attitudes of distrust are formed in response to specific events, information or experiences and can be addressed at specific political agents in response to assessments regarding their capabilities, values and interests. More importantly, citizens are able to hold different attitudes towards different parts of the political system according to their perceptions of untrustworthiness. We conclude that both the similarities and the differences in the way each citizen evaluates political agents to arrive to a distrusting political attitude are highly informative for our understanding of citizen orientations. When considering the differences and the specific evaluations attached to different parts of the

political system, we can investigate in more detail the aspects of distrust that are associated with behavioural intentions and related political attitudes and further, we can identify the reasons why citizens may update their perceptions of untrustworthiness. When considering the similarities, we can observe that distrust of different political objects are still part of an overarching political attitude and can rarely be developed in isolation. This overarching attitude of political distrust can act as a cognitive shortcut and guide perceptions of any potential political agent. Empirical evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, points to this double function of citizens' political distrust.

1.5 Chapter summaries

The final section of this introductory chapter presents an overview of the upcoming chapters. It briefly outlines the main question each chapter sets out to address, the way it fits within this thesis and the key points and contribution it brings in answering the overarching research question of what is political distrust.

Chapter 2 lays out the theoretical framework for the study of political distrust. It begins with a review of the relevant conceptual work and the available definitions in the literature, which have been mainly developed around trust, and adapts them to the study of distrusting attitudes. The existing scholarly discussion of political distrust is intertwined with that of political trust, but through this review of the most important theoretical perspectives our aim remains to explain political distrust and disentangle it from competing notions, such as lack of trust, efficacy, support, alienation, disaffection, and cynicism. We evaluate the theoretical significance of distrusting attitudes towards government and the state, via the articulation of civic culture prerequisites and the basis of political legitimacy through citizen support. On this theoretical basis, we conclude that citizen distrust can pose a threat to democratic governance and erode diffuse support for the regime. The chapter also reviews the theoretical arguments and existing research into the effects of distrusting attitudes on citizens' allegiant and participant orientation towards the political system, which have often resulted in conflicting hypotheses and findings. We believe the focus of this thesis on distrust can help us rethink and also resolve some of the confusion. Reviewing the existing analytical approaches to the study of distrust from various disciplines, the chapter concludes with a

conceptual model of political distrust, which marks this research project's first contribution to our understanding of this attitude area. This conceptualisation is also grounded in the findings of empirical qualitative work carried out as part of the thesis. The analysis is presented in more detail and discussed thoroughly in Chapter 4.

The conceptual model describes political distrust as a process whereby citizens assess the prospective behaviour of political agents, as well as evaluations of past behaviour, to formulate expectations of negative outcomes from interaction with that agent. Although the particular actions and political attributes that form the basis of untrustworthiness between different institutional agents, the government, political figures, such as the prime minister, and political parties may differ, they invariably follow the same three evaluative dimensions: a technical dimension, where citizens assess incompetence in ability, outcomes or processes; a moral dimension, where citizens evaluate the ethics, fairness or injustices perceived in the actions and intentions of political agents; and an interest-based dimension, where citizens evaluate the interests political agents are set to fulfil as diverging from their own. These three evaluative dimensions, alone or – more often than not – in combination, lead citizens to formulate judgments of political distrust and set in motion a series of emotive and cognitive responses, which in turn influence citizens' future actions and decisions. This conceptual model establishes political distrust as a relational attitude which is therefore grounded in evaluations of a political entity and does not stand in isolation. At the same time, such evaluations abound in the political lives of citizens and are habitually synthesised in an overall attitude based on the estimated trustworthiness or untrustworthiness of the political system as a whole. We affirm that citizens are able to make individual evaluations and that the two functions are not incompatible. It is precisely this double function of political distrust that renders it such a potent attitude for political behaviour and democratic support and simultaneously allows it to be updated or reversed in response to institutional changes and new experiences. The detailed conceptualisation of political distrust also enables us to disentangle the notion from competing concepts and develop a line of inquiry tailored specifically to distrust.

Chapter 3 presents in detail the overarching research methodology and methodological choices made at each step of the project. It explains the choice of a mixed methods research approach as the most appropriate methodology for the study of political distrust attitudes, as a contested concept and highlights the strengths of this relatively recent, but increasingly

popular research method. The qualitative research component serves the purpose of re-examining political distrust judgments inductively, putting citizens and their expressions and perceptions at the centre of the research endeavour. It is a necessary step for a project that seeks to investigate the meaning of distrust judgments and to unearth the way such judgments operate for citizens, before it can proceed to propose a conceptual model that claims to capture the meaning, function and ontological status of political distrust. Qualitative empirical work was conducted in more than one European country to allow for multiple political culture inputs and increase potential generalisability of findings outside a single national context. The choice of countries where research was conducted was motivated primarily by the aforementioned research question, i.e. the availability of distrusting citizen attitudes and the flexibility of citizens to express such views freely. Forty-eight popular narrative interviews were conducted in three European established democracies (the UK, Italy and Greece). Narrative content was transcribed and translated, undertaking a seven-step thematic analysis to derive common threads of meanings and lines of evaluations in citizens' expressions of political distrust. The analysis of qualitative evidence informs the conceptual model of political distrust presented in Chapter 2 and guided succeeding choices on the operationalisation of political distrust through survey measures.

Given the central role of political distrust attitudes for citizens' political behaviour and support for democracy, scholarly interest is not only theoretical and conceptual, but expands to the identification and measurement of these attitudes in large-scale quantitative surveys. The second part of the methodology chapter maps the process of operationalisation and measurement of political distrust attitudes through a multi-item survey indicator. The new measure was employed in an online survey of English respondents and provided quantitative evidence to further investigate the structure and function of distrusting attitudes. This quantitative part of the thesis makes a second contribution to the study of distrust by proposing a new survey measure and exploring the dimensionality and structure of distrust. The statistical analysis carried out adds further strength to the proposed conceptual model of political distrust, examining construct validity and addressing the final question of this research project, which concerns the relationship between political distrust, related political attitudes and citizens' political behaviour.

After explaining the overarching methodological approach and the particular research choices made in this study of political distrust, the subsequent three chapters comprise the empirical

core of the thesis, presenting and analysing the findings from the narrative interviews carried out and survey data collected. Chapter 4 provides a detailed exploration of citizen expressions of political distrust as these emerge through narrative accounts from Greece, Italy and the UK. It identifies the main themes citizens resort to when evaluating their political systems and uncovers the meaning they ascribe to distrusting attitudes across national contexts. The findings from popular narratives give rise to the conceptual model for the study of political distrust described in Chapter 2, defined as expectations of harmful outcomes from interactions with political agents, based on retrospective and prospective evaluations. Expressions of distrust entail three evaluative dimensions based on technical incompetence, ethics or unfairness, and perceived incongruent interests. The evaluative aspect of distrusting judgments appears to operate similarly for different study participants and the various parts of the political systems being evaluated. Other key issues that emerge from the study of expressions of distrust are presented and discussed in detail with the aid of interview extracts. Firstly, although distrust is identified as relational (established between the citizen and a state agent), dynamic and cyclical (sensitive to past experiences and influencing one's approach to future interactions), it can also spill-over from specific evaluations to systemic attitudes and vice-versa. We argue that this double function of attitudes of political distrust sits at the core of its significance for democratic citizenship, as well as its difficulty to be captured empirically through survey measures. This chapter attempts to address this issue, firstly, by articulating the two processes in a clear way, and secondly, by discussing the particular expressions, emotive and cognitive responses accompanying citizen distrusting judgments, to gain a better understanding of the two functions. It concludes with a discussion of the most important political actors citizens use to relate to their political system and as key targets for political distrust. In this discussion we identify the national parliament as a key institutional player that represents a symbolic aspect of representative democracy and consider the variation in citizen interpretations of, and the political party citizens feel closest to, as a partisan player integral to one's feeling of representation and point of contact with politicians, policies, elections and political outcomes.

Chapter 5 introduces the first quantitative analysis and findings based on the new indicator of political distrust. The purpose of this chapter is to present an initial description of the data and interpret the significance of our findings for the conceptual model of distrust. Specifically, it examines the status of the three evaluative dimensions; technical, ethical and interest-based in the two time projections and investigates similarities and differences in

respondents' assessments of the two political objects. In this chapter we explore the way in which the different evaluations of untrustworthiness associate with each other, the underlying response structures that are formed and the ways in which respondents are grouped together based on their response patterns. We also investigate the reliability, dimensionality and validity of the new political distrust indicator.

We find that the three dimensions of technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations identified through earlier qualitative work capture aspects of political distrust attitudes on a single dimension. Retrospective and prospective assessments of untrustworthy political conduct are also important aspects of distrusting attitudes, and we observe that across our sample of respondents prospective evaluations are consistently less negative than retrospective ones, possibly pointing to a positive prospective bias. We also find that evaluations of untrustworthiness are lower for respondents' preferred political parties than for the national parliament. This is considered more a validation of our research design than a surprising finding of political distrust attitudes. The survey items touching on one's assessments of their preferred political party capture the lower boundary of political distrust. Respondents differentiate between evaluative assessments of their preferred parties and questions asking about national parliament along all evaluative dimensions. We also find that for assessments of national parliament extreme negative responses are more frequent than extreme positive responses, especially regarding considerations of incongruent-interests, which is the easiest item for respondents to register negative evaluations. We believe this further highlights the relevance of examining negative political attitudes and investigating the underlying evaluations of untrustworthy political conduct.

Overall, we find that the twelve items used in the measurement of political distrust can form a reliable scale and load on a single latent concept. The data suggest that despite differences in the assessment of the two political targets, evaluations still tap into a latent attitude of political distrust. We argue that this reflects a double function of distrusting attitudes: one following a cognitive and affective process where citizens assess the trustworthiness of political agents along the three evaluative dimensions identified, and another following a cognitive shortcut where distrusting attitudes influence perceptions and assessments of political agents, making them all relate to each other. We conclude with a test of construct validity for the new political distrust scales using associated political variables and demographic characteristics.

Chapter 6 is the final empirical chapter of the thesis and focuses on the insights our measure of political distrust provides to the relation of distrust with other political attitudes, citizen characteristics and political behaviour. It investigates the association of the new measure of political distrust attitudes with external variables identified in the literature and in conceptual work to be related to distrust. We have included in our survey measures of political cynicism, political efficacy, strength of identification with the UK, political knowledge, ideological orientation and demographic characteristics, as well as other measures of democratic support: satisfaction with democracy and a traditionally phrased institutional trust item for national parliament. The latter offers an additional comparison for the political distrust scale, as well as for the two separate indices of distrust in national parliament and in one's preferred political party. We find that for certain related variables such as political efficacy and political knowledge the new measure of distrust is better able to capture the link between the two and to highlight the nuanced relationship identified by theoretical investigations. Using the two indices of political distrust in national parliament and preferred party we show that the relationship between these variables is not uniform for all types of distrusting attitudes.

We also look at the effect of political distrust on future intentions of political behaviour. We are particularly interested in types of political behaviour that we identified during exploratory work and key actions for democratic processes. In our survey, we include items that refer to active political participation (attending a peaceful demonstration, joining a political party and joining an NGO or other group) and behaviour that is considered unwanted and disruptive for democratic processes, such as abstaining and blank voting, voting for an extremist party, attending violent demonstrations or leaving the country. These measures refer to respondents' reflections of such actions, that is, whether they would consider such behaviour in the future and not realised behaviour, yet we do find significant associations of distrust with such intentions. We not only investigate the contentious association between distrust and political participation intentions, but also disentangle some of the confusion by highlighting the motivating and demotivating effects of different components of distrusting attitudes. We find that overall distrust increases intentions for disruptive political action and decreases intentions for active participation in politics, yet these effects are driven primarily by attitudes targeted at different parts of the political system. Distrust of national parliament has a motivating influence on non-constructive types of political behaviour, such as abstaining or voting for an extreme political party, while distrust of one's preferred party has a

demotivating effect on active political participation, such as joining a peaceful demonstration. Finally, we also find evidence, in line with previous analyses of the new measure of distrust, to support that certain components of distrusting attitudes are more important than others in motivating behavioural intentions. Perceptions of untrustworthiness for national parliament that are based on diverging interests are not enough to motivate actions such as abstaining or leaving the country. On the contrary, distrust based on moral evaluations, especially retrospective ones, is influential. We discuss the implications of this analysis for our model of political distrust and the contribution it makes to our understanding of distrusting attitudes in general.

Chapter 7 offers a conclusion to the thesis and the opportunity to revisit and discuss some of the key insights achieved. It considers the wider implications of our findings for the existing literature in citizen attitudes of political distrust and discusses the limitations of the thesis as well as possible avenues for further research into citizen attitudes towards their political systems. We revisit the conceptual model of political distrust and one of the initial puzzles in the study of distrusting attitudes: the relationship between political trust and distrust. We argue that the two notions can be thought of as sitting at opposite ends of a single attitudinal continuum, yet reaffirm the two concepts are not necessarily symmetrical and that the absence of one does not assume the presence of the other. We urge for further social science research that can identify the limits of negative, positive and neutral political attitudes of distrust, trust and lack of trust and conclude the thesis by considering the contribution of the conceptual model and measurement indicator of political distrust for the state of research in political attitudes.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Model for the Study of Political Distrust

2.1 What is so special about political distrust?
2.2 State of current research
2.3 Analytical approaches to the study of distrust
2.4 The conceptual model of political distrust based on technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations
2.5 Dimensions and spill-overs of political distrust
2.6 Towards conceptual clarity: Political distrust and related concepts

The study of political distrust presents multiple puzzles to the willing political science researcher. There is a lack of consensus on the theoretical status of the concept, its meaning and its relation to trust. Empirical and often conceptual discussions have been overshadowed by the notion of trust, and a primary aim of this thesis is to conceptualise and investigate political distrust in its own right. At the same time, many of the aforementioned problems also plague the study of political trust resulting in a lot of confusion in the way theories about the causes and consequences of political distrust are formulated and tested. This thesis does not claim to conclusively address all of these issues. Instead, it focuses on providing a clear concept of political distrust based on empirical exploratory work and a survey measure of distrusting attitudes, which can advance our understanding of citizen attitudes and citizen behaviour. In this way it hopes to act as a solid step towards addressing some of the many puzzles political scientists face when studying citizen political orientations.

This chapter begins with a reiteration of the puzzle of political distrust judgments and the research question guiding this thesis. It then situates the current research project among the existing literature, which spans conceptual and empirical work covering an impressive array of issues relating to distrust. It looks back to the theoretical relevance of political distrust in studies of democratic support and political behaviour and affirms the important role attitudes of political distrust play in modern democracies. We review and revise the most appropriate analytical approaches to the study of distrusting attitudes and then proceed with the conceptual model that aims to capture the specific evaluative processes entailed in attitudes of distrust, as well as their dynamic and cyclical nature. Its aim is to merge the specificity of distrusting judgments with the systemic nature of diffuse distrust, both of which are integral

parts of political distrust and a common cause of confusion in the operationalisation and interpretation of empirical evidence. Finally, we present key concepts in the study of political behaviour that have been associated with attitudes of political distrust and are also used in subsequent parts of this study exploring the structure and operation of distrusting attitudes.

2.1 What is so special about political distrust?

Despite the recent increase in scholarly work and public discussions on citizens' distrust of their governments, politicians and political systems, the academic literature is still ambivalent towards the concept of political distrust. Most existing theoretical work has focused on the definition and function of trust, which is considered to promote cooperation, facilitate social and economic exchanges, enable rule compliance and, therefore, to contribute towards stable democratic processes, economic growth and human development (Fukuyama, 1995; Hardin, 2002; Braithwaite and Levi, 1998; Blind, 2006; Schul et al., 2008). As a result, the theoretical and conceptual framework of political trust has overshadowed most of the discussion around distrust, as well as the quantitative measurement and empirical study of the causes and implications of distrust. Yet, political distrust was the object of much scholarly investigation carried out in the 1970s and 1980s, as political scientists became alarmed by the mounting evidence of alienated citizens and attempted to understand the phenomenon of disaffection and its implications for the stability of democratic values and political systems (Hart, 1978; Parry, 1976; Sigelman and Feldman, 1983; Craig, 1980; Gamson, 1968).

From this work we have a variety of definitions for citizens' political distrust, all of which concur with a description of distrusting attitudes as a negative orientation towards the political system, its agents and outputs. Miller (1974a) emphasised the importance of political outputs and explained political distrust as "a statement of the belief that the government is not functioning and producing outputs in accord with individual expectations" (952). Sigelman and Feldman (1983) focused on citizens' personal interests and defined political distrust as "the belief that government is not being run in one's interest" (119). Perhaps the most comprehensive definition, even for today's discussion regarding citizens' distrust, is Vivien Hart's:

> "[T]hat which I call political distrust is, in a democracy, an unfavourable evaluation of the processes of their polity based upon the perception by citizens of a discrepancy between the actual operation of the political system and the democratic norms publicly accepted as its standards." (1978: 2)

In this approach, emphasis is placed on the discrepancy between political operations and democratic norms, suggesting that political distrust is a result of a wanting political system that is not functioning in accordance with publicly acceptable standards. All of the above definitions may promote different aspects of political distrust, yet they form a consensus over two key characteristics of distrusting attitudes: firstly, that distrust is based upon citizens' *perceptions* of their political system or their *beliefs* about how the system is being run. Secondly, these perceptions are specifically related to the political system, its processes, agents and outputs. Political distrust is, therefore, primarily a *political* judgment based on citizens' perceptions of untrustworthy political agents. Beyond the fact that attitudes of distrust refer to citizens' perceptions of their political life, there is a polyphony on what precisely is being evaluated (the government, politicians, the political system in its entirety), on what actions (outputs, processes and operation) and along what lines (individual expectations, best-interest or democratic standards).

These are only some of the sources of confusion that have followed the study of political distrust (and often trust), causing heated debates among political scientists and policy practitioners alike. Already in 1978, in her book *Distrust and Democracy,* Vivien Hart noted "there is no disagreement that substantial numbers of people in both Britain and America now disparage politics. The disagreement is over the significance of this fact – over what political distrust means for those who express it and over what it means, and whether it means the same, for each of these polities." (1978: 2). To this day, academic discussions continue to debate how to interpret such observable phenomena in democratic communities (Stoker, 2011; Hay, 2009; Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011; Norris, 2011; Levi and Stoker, 2000). Unfortunately, they have attempted to do so without a clear understanding of what political distrust is and what it means for the citizens that express it.

This thesis aims to make a contribution to the study of political distrust by tackling this gap regarding the meaning and nature of distrusting political attitudes. Before presenting the theoretical framework for this study and the conceptual model it advances, it is first necessary

to explain why political distrust warrants such a thorough investigation and scientific scrutiny. The scope of this project is delimited to the reconceptualisation of political distrust and the investigation of the structure and operation of distrusting attitudes. This is its primary focus and it argues that a study of political distrust aimed at investigating the meaning such attitudes have for the citizens that express them and at offering a clear conceptual model of its underlying evaluations and functions is a necessary step before we can interpret survey trends and comprehend changes taking place in democratic societies. To that end we also provide a novel measure of distrust based on the conceptual model developed through this thesis, and add further evidence as to its properties, functioning and contribution regarding the influence of distrusting attitudes to citizens' political behaviour. Nevertheless, for the reader that remains unconvinced about the importance of citizen attitudes of distrust, the section below briefly addresses the question, "Why is understanding attitudes of political distrust important in the first place?"

One reason lies in the central place trust and distrust have been given at the very core of government according to Western political thought. Following John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*, a government is formed as "a body of men *entrusted* with supreme legislative power which is a delegation from the community" (§141 quoted in Parry, 1976: 130, emphasis in the original). Even from the earliest of political times in Ancient Greece, trust was considered necessary for the healthy functioning of a society and identified as a source of stability and cooperation that would benefit all citizens (Hardin, 1998; Baier, 1986). As briefly mentioned in the preceding chapter, even in republican theories that place an emphasis on citizens being watchful of their government and political institutions, the role of vigilance is to allow trust in the political system to flourish (Lenard, 2008).

Easton's (1965) seminal work on the study of political systems identified political support as a necessary input in order to counterbalance the stress imposed by citizen demands and ensure the stability of the system. He further introduced the influential distinction between specific and diffuse citizen support; the former referring to support that is generated by system outputs and the latter referring to beliefs about the benefits of the regime and associated with the legitimacy of the system. Political trust has commonly been considered part of the input of diffuse support in a political system. It allows the system to function even when specific support, that is, support for policy programmes, decisions or incumbents, is lacking. According to this framework, changes in the input of support would affect the way

the political system can operate, hence the level of trust that citizens extend to their political authorities and political regime is crucial for the healthy and continuous functioning of the democratic system (Easton, 1965; Marien, 2011b; Norris, 1999). Yet Easton's systems analysis does not explicitly consider citizen distrust; an imbalance in the system occurs only when citizens no longer express diffuse and specific support for the political regime.

Positive cognitive and affective orientations towards the political system were also given a leading role in the systematic analysis of political culture. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's (1963) framework for the civic culture identified an allegiant and participant citizen culture to contribute to stable and successful democratic systems. According to this framework citizens must not only be participants who are cognitively and affectively connected to the political system; they must also have a positive or allegiant orientation. A neutral citizenry is described as apathetic, whereas a negatively oriented citizenry contributes to an *alienated* political culture. Although political distrust is not named as a key characteristic in this framework, to the extent that distrusting citizen attitudes connote a negative political orientation, they can be considered to contribute to an alienated citizen culture (Inglehart, 1997; Dalton, 2000; Newton, 2001). Whereas allegiant orientations towards the political regime can steer a democratic system through trying periods, negative orientations pose a challenge to the development of a civic culture (Almond and Verba, 1963; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Putnam, 1993).

With the registered decrease in political trust trends after the 1970s, the decline in electoral turnout and the spread of political protest and other forms of activism, political scientists have focused more and more on the concept of alienation and political disaffection. In Gamson's theory of political mobilisation and active citizenship, political trust and distrust were treated as key organising concepts (Gamson, 1968). Gamson argued that political distrust does not necessarily contribute to political alienation, but it rather depends on a citizen's level of political efficacy, which is the belief that the citizen can understand and meaningfully impact political processes (Sigelman and Feldman, 1983; Paige, 1971). Political distrust combined with high political efficacy, the theory goes, must motivate active participation and contribute to a mobilised citizenry. It is the combination of perceived shortcomings of the political system and the belief that citizens can make a difference that can best explain mobilisation. However, when combined with feelings of inefficacy, political distrust leads to alienation and political disaffection and is a bad omen for the health of the

political system. Despite the intuitive merits of this theory it consistently produced unsupporting or very weak evidence when tested empirically, pointing to a more complicated interaction between individual political attitudes and the political system (Hawkins et al., 1971; Sigelman and Feldman, 1983).

Therefore, political distrust has become a relevant political attitude demanding further investigation, due to its links to theories of system support, civic political culture and political behaviour. The existing literature has revisited some of these theoretical frameworks and has also investigated in depth the role of citizens' trusting and distrusting political attitudes in important aspects of political behaviour, such as political participation, electoral choice, law compliance and community participation (Hetherington, 2005; Uslaner, 2002; Rothstein and Stolle, 2008). We present these advances in the following section.

2.2 State of current research

Due to the aforementioned theoretical approaches to the study of democratic systems, levels of political trust were closely monitored through national surveys; once the first signs of trust erosion appeared (in the US in the early 1970s and Western and Northern Europe shortly after), they instigated widespread academic and public debates regarding the health and future of these democracies. Since then, the scholarly research on political distrust can be placed in three broad categories. One concerns the resurgent debate on whether citizen distrust is 'good' or 'bad' for democratic politics, which has been based mainly on theoretical and conceptual reasoning (Hart, 1978; Braithwaite and Levi, 1998; Warren, 1999). The idea that distrust may be the rational or 'correct' attitude towards state actors or a system that does not function in a way that is in line with citizen expectations has made some scholars reluctant to assign normative associations to the phenomena of political trust and distrust. Misplaced distrust, in the sense of distrusting a political agent that has trustworthy qualities, is damaging due to the lost cooperation and benefits that could have been achieved for the citizen and the society as a whole. But given that misplaced trust to an untrustworthy political agent should be equally detrimental, distrust extended rightly so to an untrustworthy system can protect the citizen from the harm and betrayal of potential interactions (Levi, 1997; Hardin, 2002).

However, the present thesis argues that once distrust comes to characterise citizen-state relations, it can impede the positive input required by the system to deal with citizen demands, thereby inhibiting – at least for as long as the system and its agents are perceived untrustworthy – all the positive outcomes associated with effective governance, cooperation and the ability to solve problems of collective action. Citizens may be right to be distrustful of an untrustworthy politician, a malfunctioning political institution or political process, but this could only be beneficial for democratic governance overall if untrustworthiness can be contained: if the specific actor can be replaced by a trustworthy one or the institution can be reformed so as to uphold democratic norms. This is often a challenging endeavour, as research into corrupt incumbents and the persistence of political distrust has shown (Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Anduiza et al., 2013).

Another collection of empirical work has focused on aggregate levels of political trust and distrust. Its key question is whether distrust is indeed increasing in democratic communities and crucially, whether it is eroding diffuse system support (Norris, 1999; Klingemann, 2015). Being predominantly empirical, most of this research has relied on survey data and existing measures of political trust, initially from the US and subsequently adding evidence from other democracies. The fierce debate that ensued the increasing trends of distrust shifted attention to the operationalisation and measurement of key variables, trying to determine what precisely these indicators were capturing (Levi and Stoker, 2000; Miller, 1974a, 1974b; Citrin, 1974).

Despite the persistence of the same measure indicators, there have been attempts to revisit and revise the aforementioned theoretical frameworks, in order to incorporate the challenges posed by the increasing frequency of critical and negative citizen orientations towards politics in established democracies (Dalton and Welzel, 2014; Norris, 1999, 2011; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005). One approach has been to separate the targets of political distrust following the Eastonian typology, from a more varied and frequently updated level of specific support for incumbents and policy outputs, to a more stable set of value and affective orientations towards the processes and principles of the regime. It was proposed that as long as citizens in established democracies remain committed to democratic regime principles and processes, distrusting attitudes towards specific authorities would not erode diffuse system support (Norris, 1999). Survey-based evidence from democracies around the world indicate

that the majority of citizens fall under this category of 'distrusting', 'dissatisfied' or 'critical' democrats (Dalton and Shin, 2014; Klingemann, 1999; Kumlin, 2011). However, the implications of this phenomenon and the analyses that have been carried out are still tentative (Norris, 2011). It is difficult, if not impossible, to interpret the phenomenon of citizen political distrust without a clear understanding of what such distrusting attitudes entail and when scholars are relying on survey-based indicators that were not created to capture distrust in the first place.

Finally, a third strand of research has focused on the causes of political trust and distrust, as well as their implications for democratic governance (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011; Hetherington, 2005; Hetherington and Husser, 2012; McLarren, 2012). As mentioned in the preceding chapter, a number of studies have looked at aggregate trust levels from a comparative perspective and explored macro-level variants, broadly categorised as institutional performance or cultural-historical factors, both of which have been found to influence levels of trust registered in a political community (Mishler and Rose, 1997; McAllister, 1999). Studies that focused on micro-level determinants delved deeper into the role of individual perceptions of government performance in a series of policy areas, such as the economy, crime and security, as well as of individual evaluations of procedural fairness, impartiality and democratic standards (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Chanley et al., 2000; Rothstein and Stolle, 2008). These studies also identified the role of individual characteristics and general attitudes towards one's life. The effects of education, political interest and knowledge, in particular, have been highlighted as contributing to more positive orientations towards political institutions and general levels of satisfaction, although the rise in education levels and simultaneous decline in mass survey trends of trust suggest the empirical link between the two is more nuanced.

The impact of political distrust on other attitudes and types of political behaviour has been the focus of a large body of work exploring the association between levels of political trust and voting behaviour, different modes of political participation and mobilisation, as well as support for policy programmes or law compliance. Hetherington and his colleagues have shown that levels of political trust affect perceptions of incumbents, policy preferences and support for policies of a redistributive nature (Hetherington 1998, 2005; Hetherington and Husser, 2012). Research across Europe and the US has also found evidence that levels of political trust affect compliance with the law and tax avoidance (Scholz and Lubell, 1998;

Hooghe et al., 2011).

Investigation of political distrust's effect on political participation has been equally prevalent, albeit less conclusive. As mentioned before, according to Gamson's mistrustful-efficacious hypothesis, distrusting citizens should be more motivated to engage in political action in order to voice their grievances and alter those processes, incumbents or parts of the political system they perceive to be untrustworthy. On the other hand, one could expect distrusting citizens to participate less in politics, at least in terms of voting and other acts of conventional participation, given their negative views of the political system and its agents and the fact that empirical findings show trust and efficacy to be strongly and positively associated on the individual basis (Finifter, 1970; Levi and Stoker, 2000). Most empirical studies support this latter claim, showing that distrusting citizens are more likely to abstain in an election or vote for fringe parties/third-party alternatives, where these are available (Hooghe et al., 2011; Dassonneville et al., 2015; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005; Citrin and Luks, 1998). Nevertheless, these questions remain as the types of political participation available to citizens expand and change, the distinction between institutional and non-institutional forms of political participation blurs, and additional types of activism and disruptive participation gain attention.

Finally, within the causes and effects literature, another body of work has focused on the association between different forms of trust and distrust in societies, especially the link between political trust and social trust or social capital. Although the causal claim and direction of causality between political and social trust have been heavily contested, more and more scholars argue that distrust towards the political authorities inhibits trust formation and cooperation among citizens in modern day complex societies (Fukuyama, 1995, 2014; Braithwaite and Levi, 1998; Offe, 1999). Empirical research based on survey data supports the view that political institutions that are perceived to be effective and fair help to facilitate general trust among citizens (Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994).

Scholarly research into the causes and consequences of political distrust has utilised almost exclusively existing survey measures of political *trust*. We believe this creates the first impediment to understanding political distrust and interpreting the meaning of these survey results for citizens and their democratic communities. Although this body of work has provided important insights into the potentially powerful role attitudes of distrust can play in

citizens' behaviour, emphasising further the need for an in-depth examination of political distrust, such survey data alone can never tell us what citizens are thinking when they claim to distrust their political system, nor reveal the underlying structure of such distrusting attitudes. The operationalisation of political trust and distrust and the survey indicators used in empirical research have received considerable criticism; to some extent they can be said to add more confusion rather than conceptual clarity to the study of these attitudes (Marien, 2011a; Levi and Stoker, 2000). Recognising this confusion, as well as the prevalence of negative and critical citizen orientations towards politics, an emerging body of work is beginning to focus on the meaning and role of distrusting attitudes (Hardin, 2004; Ullmann-Margalit, 2004; Lenard, 2008; Schul et al., 2008; Van de Walle and Six, 2013; Rosanvallon, 2008).

This thesis aims to contribute to this body of research, with a study focused on citizen attitudes of distrust towards their political system. We believe that having a better understanding of what constitutes distrusting attitudes and how these attitudes function provides a contribution to the on-going debates outlined above. The thesis takes a step back to re-evaluate the concept of political distrust, considers the most appropriate theoretical approaches and builds a conceptual model grounded on individual-level empirical research, but it also aims to provide a survey measure of distrust and investigate how it relates to citizen attributes and behaviour. In this sense, it still speaks to the larger question regarding citizen attitudes towards politics and the potential implications of political distrust for democratic communities. In the remaining sections of this chapter we review the main analytical approaches to the study of distrust, inside and outside the realm of politics, and present the conceptual model of citizen attitudes of political distrust derived from qualitative research.

2.3 Analytical approaches to the study of distrust

We begin by considering the ontological nature of 'distrust' and the analytical approaches to this attitude area. As mentioned previously in this chapter, distrust entails a negative orientation towards the political system and its subcomponents, but there are many different analytical approaches that emphasise various aspects of distrusting attitudes and their

operation. Trust and distrust have been given a prominent position in facilitating or impeding desirable outcomes outside the realm of politics. Most fields that study human cooperation from business and economics (Knack and Zak, 2003; Korczynski, 2000; Gambetta, 1988), work environments (Kramer and Tyler, 1995; Kramer, 1999; Lewicki et al., 1998), social and interpersonal relationships (Uslaner, 2011; Delhey et al., 2011) to international negotiations among nation states (Kydd, 2005; Horne, 2004; Larson, 1997) have written extensively about the role of trust and distrust. In this section we bring together analytical approaches from different fields and present the most relevant aspects that we believe can be informative for understanding relations of distrust. Since a large part of the existing approaches have focused on the concept of trust, our aim is also to evaluate whether these can be extended and applied to the analysis of distrusting attitudes in an insightful manner.

We already know that trust and distrust are cognitive and affective notions that become particularly relevant in conditions of risk or uncertainty (Levi, 1997; Fenton, 2000). Gambetta has described trust and distrust as "a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action, both *before* he can monitor such action (or independently of his capacity ever to be able to monitor it) *and* in a context in which it affects his own action" (1988: 217, emphasis in the original). Distrust is therefore the result of a probability calculation regarding actions that will be harmful to the truster, to some degree. Importantly, it is an attitude that is relevant in motivating subsequent decisions and actions.

There are still multiple views on what the calculations that shape this subjective probability entail. This is where we find different analytical approaches to distrust. The strategic approach focuses on a rational analysis of the agent's motivation for acting in a manner that reflects, or 'encapsulates', one's interests. Russel Hardin (2002, 2004) formulated this account of trust as 'encapsulated interest' and extended it to include the decision to distrust.[7] This decision depends on a cognitive exercise of determining, based on the information available to you, whether an agent's capacities and intentions would lead them to behave in a way that goes against your best interest. Given this requirement, the strategic approach demands that the relationship of distrust is specific to the domain and task at hand. For

[7] The extension of the 'encapsulated interest' approach from trust to distrust is not without its problems, as it fails to account for the difference between agents who do not have a motivation to encapsulate one's interest in their actions and agents who have a motivation to go against that said interest. As discussed in the later sections of this chapter, both can result in distrust, but there are important differences between levels of distrust.

example, you may distrust a shopkeeper who overcharged you for the goods purchased and may very well refrain from visiting his shop in the future. But you would not say you distrust him to be a good and faithful husband, as this is an entirely different matter on which you have insufficient relevant information.

Of course, individuals rarely have sufficient information about every aspect of social life, and already, one might think that what leads an agent to cheat or betray trust in one instance might lead them to do so in another as well. The tripartite formulation of distrust (A distrusts B to do X) is useful as it is analytically straightforward, but at the same time, it is highly limiting in explaining actual human behaviour given the complexity of social relations and the informational burden it places on the individual. Furthermore, the purely rational approach fails to account for situations where, (a) trust is extended even when it goes against the standard understanding of self-interest, and (b) distrust is established without sufficient information about the capabilities and intentions of agents. When theorising about attitudes of distrust (and trust) it is important to remember that they are social constructs employed in a world with a high degree of social complexity, where encounters and decision-making are often recurrent and do not operate in isolation as a 'one-off'. The example used above mentioned an experience of trust-betrayal (the initial trust involved engaging in a transaction) as the source of information, although we could have used an external third party supplying information, which would require an evaluation of the trustworthiness of that information and simply increase the amount of complexity.

To alleviate the demands of this strategic approach, some scholars proposed an alternative approach to trust and distrust that depends on one's view of ethical reciprocity. This is the idea that shared normative values will impose certain types of behaviour among agents (Braithwaite and Levi, 1998; Ostrom and Walker, 2003; Letki, 2006). In a similar manner, some scholars have preferred to view trust and distrust as an attribute of the individual and the extent in which she holds an overarching moralistic worldview (Uslaner, 2002, 2008; Mansbridge, 1999). This approach shifts the focus entirely on the psychological traits and characteristics of the individual that trusts or distrusts. Generalised trust is based on the belief that the world is a good and fair place, where people like this individual are treated in a positive manner and any trust extended is rewarded and reciprocated. On the contrary, distrust reflects a belief that the world is a dangerous place, where people like this individual are treated poorly, extending trust is unwise and hence the best approach is to refrain from

putting oneself in a vulnerable position. These views are considered to be formed during early developmental and socialisation stages and are strongly associated with life experiences, as well as major events in a community.

Some evidence supports a 'winner's hypothesis' of trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011), meaning that those who are at the top of the society in terms of health, education, income and life satisfaction tend to have a more positive outlook in life and trust their compatriots, other social groups, institutions and political authorities. However, we believe this approach is overly restricting. The theory of general trusters and distrusters is limiting for the study of citizen-state relations and for other social interactions, as it does not allow for variation across cases of interactions depending on the trustworthy or untrustworthy characteristics of the agent being evaluated. Shifting the focus back to the relationship between the individual citizen and the political community provides a more promising approach to understanding attitudes of trust and distrust. Nevertheless, the idea that distrust entails a belief regarding shared norms of reciprocity can supplement the rational-strategic approach and provide a basis for the self-fulfilling nature of trust and distrust. It is not only the case that 'the use of trust increases trust further', but also that the establishment of distrust also increases distrust further, setting in motion a virtuous or vicious circle (Levi, 1997). The violation or absence of such norms of reciprocity render distrust self-validating, either by preventing agents from engaging in interactions that can invalidate distrust or by leading to widespread and accepted practices that foster untrustworthy behaviour and further distrust (Blackburn, 1998; Gambetta, 1988).

The two approaches outlined above can work in a complementary rather than an antagonistic manner to explain distrusting attitudes. We believe that distrust can be both rational, that is, the result of strategic calculation within the confines of one's knowledge and perceptions, but that it also depends on the existence of shared normative values between the person that decides whether to distrust and the agent being evaluated, which transcend the standard understanding of 'encapsulated interest' and are not solely specific to the information and task at hand. We also draw insights from an alternative approach to relations of distrust based on the work of social identity theorists and the principles of in-group and out-group formation. Although much of this work has gone unnoticed by the literature on trust, studies carried out by social identity theorists and evolutionary game theorists find that as humans we are predisposed to trust our own kind and people who are 'similar to us', rather than out-

groups (Brewer, 1999; Turner et al., 1994; Turner, 1975; Tajfel, 1978).[8] The existence of in-group and out-group bias shows that "members of an in-group tend to perceive other in-group members in generally favourable terms, particularly as being *trustworthy, honest and cooperative*" (Messick and Brewer, 1983: 27-28, emphasis in the original). Respectively, members of out-groups are approached with suspicion and hostility, and are more likely to be viewed as untrustworthy and un-cooperative.

This approach highlights the social and repetitive aspect of human interactions and relations of distrust. As social creatures, human beings do not operate in isolation, but need to create social bonds and define their social selves through relationships. In this sense, trust and distrust are relational constructs that depend on the delineation of in-groups and out-groups and the strength or homogeneity of groups. In-group favouritism for small groups, some scholars argue, is directly related to the perception of an insecure environment and distrust of out-groups (Brewer, 1999; Kramer, 2004). In a political context, individuals that identify with a group systematically excluded from advocating its interests and holding positions of authority distrust the state and its agents, while the populist or radical political discourses attempt to delineate the political class as a separate group at odds with the rest of the political community. This theoretical approach to trust and distrust also appeals to the notion of positive and negative norms of reciprocity and helps explain the mechanism behind people's tendency to develop 'special relationships'. Life within a social context obliges people to take some risks and to cooperate in certain domains; we all need to eat, have shelter, work and at times seek assistance or services from others. When the pressure to act is inescapable, people may resort to what Gambetta describes as "a deceptive rearrangement of beliefs" (1988: 220). "Thus there are those", he explains, "who distrust entire categories of people, except the member of that category with whom they have a special relationship" (1988: 220). The general attitudes can be distrusting, but the formation of a special bond or close relationship allows some forms of cooperation to take place.

A combination of these approaches to the study of distrust can emphasise the role of rational calculation and reasoning, the importance of shared norms of reciprocity and the relational or affective identification process, all of which shape perceptions of untrustworthiness.

[8] Some exceptions are Tyler (1998), who considers the role of social identification with the authorities as a source of trust and Hooghe and Marks (2005), who find that communal identities are important in shaping views of political objects, especially in multi-level governance. See also Brewer (1999) and Scheidegger and Staerklé (2011) for more information.

Throughout these different perspectives distrust is seen as an attitude that affects one's stance towards the agent or group of agents being evaluated and shapes intentions of how to deal with the risks associated with social interaction. Distrust denotes a state of alertness, the presence of fear and risk of vulnerability, which would lead to non-cooperation and an attempt to shield oneself from harmful outcomes (Schul et al., 2008; Yamagishi et al., 1998; Gambetta, 1988). This connection between attitudes of distrust and subsequent action provides the basis for another important characteristic of distrust: the development of distrust as an attitude heuristic. Attitude heuristics operate as cognitive shortcuts in the human mind that use stored evaluations and overall assessments as a guiding indicator for action (Pratkanis, 1989; Pratkanis and Greenwald, 1989). Previous research has found that attitude heuristics are developed and employed to help individuals cope with problems of complexity, uncertainty and the lack of sufficient information that plague many aspects of social and political life. Within a society, the heuristic strategies available to citizens in order to tackle problems of uncertainty in collective-action can be derived at the societal level from culture-specific historical developments or from individual cognitive processes and learning cycles (Scholz and Lubell, 1998; Schoon and Cheng, 2011; Cosmedes and Tobby, 1994; Putnam, 1993).

Earlier research has identified a 'duty heuristic' and 'trust heuristic', which explain how positive experiences associated with the benefit of participating in a collective enhance trust and trustworthiness and promote future cooperation in the form of rule compliance and non free-riding (Scholz and Pinney, 1995; Hetherington, 2005; Scholz and Lubell, 1998). We believe that a similar heuristic mechanism can be at play when it comes to attitudes of distrust, as they too can act as a summary measure of the risks and potential harm derived from interactions with a given agent or collective and guide future behaviour.

In this section we have presented key analytical understandings of distrust from a range of scientific fields and a diverse body of work. According to the strategic account of 'encapsulated interest', distrust must be targeted and domain specific and it depends on an assessment of the motivation and capabilities of the agent and domain in question. The notions of 'general' or 'moralistic trust' render trust and distrust two distinct moral worldviews that are not targeted to a specific agent, but depend on the traits of the individual citizen. However, as humans are fundamentally social beings that need – and even want – to cooperate, establish relations and survive in a society, the concept of distrust as an attitude

targeted towards an out-group or as an attitude heuristic, can help explain instances where cooperation fails even in the absence of specific information and evidence. Furthermore, all of these approaches highlight the self-reinforcing nature of distrust. Any calculation that involves information and knowledge about past indications of untrustworthiness and group perceptions also help shape prospective expectations. Relations of distrust propagate themselves by providing ever stronger perceptions of untrustworthiness and not allowing interactions that could disprove such perceptions to take place.

As mentioned above, relations of trust and distrust are omnipresent in the lives of citizens, groups and collectives. Can the analytical approaches presented here help us to examine in-depth citizen attitudes of distrust towards political agents, institutions and the political system in general? In other words, can we speak of 'political distrust', and if so what is the most appropriate analytical framework to study such attitudes? A similar question has preoccupied scholars of political trust – some consider 'political trust' to be a misnomer, substituting the term with that of confidence or support (Hardin, 2002; Lenard, 2008; Ullmann-Margalit, 2004). This thesis has argued from the outset that attitudes of distrust are particularly apt for describing citizen-state relations. Firstly, it is the language that citizens and commentators alike use to describe current phenomena and express negative orientations towards political actors, processes and institutions. In addition to the common use of the term, looking at the way many citizens interact with political authorities, political agents and institutions invites us to analyse these relationships using a concept that can account for the observable complexity and combination of cognitive and affective hostile orientations. The aim of the thesis is precisely to develop an analytically robust and empirically sound conceptual model of political distrust that can resolve some of these disputes.

2.4 The conceptual model of political distrust based on technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations

Below, we present the conceptual model for the study of distrusting political attitudes. The model is informed by inductive research, the findings of which are presented in detail in Chapter 4, as well as by the analytical approaches to distrusting attitudes discussed in the preceding section. Qualitative empirical research focusing on citizens' accounts of political

distrust, their sentiments, expressions and explanations of distrusting attitudes, provide new evidence to address the key question guiding this thesis. Political distrust in this thesis is primarily defined as an attitude held by a citizen in relation to her political system. The meaning of political distrust as expressed by citizens and described above is an expectation of harm and other negative outcomes resulting from the operations of political agents. It denotes a hostile attitude and entails the intention of refraining from interacting with political actors and breaking any form of relationship with political agents.

As an attitude expressed by an individual citizen, political distrust is unavoidably affected by personality traits and individual characteristics in a multitude of ways. Personality and other socialisation experiences shape perceptual screens, influencing the ways in which people process information and perceive the world around them (Zaller, 1992). Since political distrust is based on perceptions of untrustworthiness, it is crucial to acknowledge such influences that may derive primarily from individual citizens and not their relation to political agents, even if these are not the main focus of our analysis. A body of work has investigated the personality traits and individual characteristics associated with political trust, and as discussed in the earlier section some scholars have formulated a theory of general trusters and distrusters on this basis (Zmerli and Newton, 2011; Uslaner, 2002). Based on the theoretical premise that 'winners' in a society are in a better position to formulate positive views of the community and political institutions and to gain from norms of reciprocity, empirical research has found that higher levels of education, income and socioeconomic status, life satisfaction and personal health are negatively associated with expressions of political distrust (Putnam, 2000; Newton and Norris, 2000). This thesis does not consider a theory of general distrusters to be the appropriate analytical approach to the study of political distrust, but acknowledges that the link between citizen characteristics and perceptions of political untrustworthiness are important to consider in any comprehensive account of political distrust.

Focusing on political distrust itself, we have conceptualised it as a relational attitude that reflects perceptions of untrustworthiness specific to the political system in its entirety or its components. In line with the definition by Gambetta presented earlier, we argue that attitudes of political distrust develop in a context where the decision to distrust affects the citizen's subsequent actions. This is not merely a derivative or effect of distrusting attitudes, but an essential part of political distrust as experienced by citizens. Exploring this attitude area using

an exploratory research approach revealed particular emotive and behavioural intention responses as part of citizens' expressions of political distrust. These are discussed further in subsequent chapters and included in the conceptual model of this thesis.

Political distrust entails the belief that political agents act in an untrustworthy manner and therefore requires information about political agents, processes and outcomes. Information becomes available through a citizen's cognitive and affective reservoir, which includes past experiences, stimuli and new information regarding the actions and other qualities of political agents. Distrust itself is expressed in two time projections: retrospective and prospective. Retrospective attitudes reflect past negative evaluations of political agents, whereas prospective distrusting attitudes refer to a belief about future untrustworthy conduct. In this sense, political distrust is not only a relational, but also a dynamic attitude. This is an important characteristic given that, as mentioned before, political distrust forces us to consider an attitude that is not formulated in an isolated environment and does not operate within the confines of a single exchange. The political lives of citizens begin even before they transition to voters and continue to be enriched year after year with new information, experiences and events that shape their orientation towards politics. Beliefs about the future conduct of political actors are influenced to a large extent by existing and past evaluations, but the two are not identical. Prospective assessments involve a bigger role for the faith or lack of faith citizens have in the political system, whereas retrospective evaluations are grounded more firmly in evidence (even if subjective). Further, exploratory empirical evidence showed that expressions of political distrust frequently follow retrospective evaluations of untrustworthiness, especially in cases where initial trust has been betrayed. Prospective assessments of untrustworthiness tap into the forward-looking nature of social experience and are more in line with the framework of strategic distrust. Crucially, these two time projections provide a dynamic aspect to attitudes of political distrust.

So far, we have not addressed perhaps the most important aspect of political distrust and have resorted to describing distrusting attitudes in a rather tautological manner: political distrust is an attitude that reflects the belief that the political system and its agents are untrustworthy. Conceptually, distrust and untrustworthiness are two distinct notions, the latter referring to qualities of the political system and its agents and the former referring to the relational dynamic attitude we have set out to study. The above description of political distrust may be empirically valid, and indeed, macro-level studies into the determinants of political distrust

would equate the two. In the existing literature, government honesty, transparency, efficiency and responsiveness have been placed high on the list of qualities that would constitute a trustworthy government (Miller and Listhaug, 1990). Nevertheless, the study of political distrust attitudes requires a definition of citizen perceptions, specifically citizen *perceptions of political untrustworthiness*. We identify three types of evaluations or dimensions that perceptions of untrustworthiness may follow.

Firstly, both retrospective and prospective perceptions of untrustworthiness can be understood as judgments of technical incompetence. Similar to the emphasis placed on the capacities of an agent to fulfil or betray trust in the strategic analytical approach, political distrust reflects evaluations of incompetent political agents and failed processes. Citizens perceive politics and positions of political power as posts that demand particular types of knowledge, competencies and skills in order for institutions, processes and indeed the democratic polity to function successfully. Political distrust does not reflect an apathetic stance towards politics or the belief that it is not relevant for citizens' lives. On the contrary it denotes a recognition that governments and state actors (in their different levels and mandates) matter and that given their roles in regulation, the economy, security, healthcare and education, to name but a few of the domains under political influence, technical incompetence and failure to perform according to the needs of the polity constitute an untrustworthy political system. Citizen distrust of a political group or institution reflects the belief that these agents are incapable of fulfilling the role requirements and that the institutions fail to produce the required outputs.

As an example, we can think of the national legislature that needs to create a sustainable state pension system that is balanced, financially sound and takes into account external factors, such as inflation, investment rates, and population demographics to ensure that contributions made today will result in a living pension in 20, 30 or even 50 years' time. Distrust of the people in charge of designing, implementing and maintaining this programme involves a perception of incompetence. Even without detailed knowledge of the requirements of a pension system, the experience of a halved pension or a pension that never arrives signals evidence of managerial, political and economic failure. There are many examples of this evaluative dimension of political distrust that emerge from the exploratory research we carried out. Distrust can be targeted at public services for being antiquated and unhelpful, at politicians and political parties that do not show the necessary skill to govern effectively or at

the entire political system based on a perception of failure and the inability of most of its parts to fulfil their role in policy, implementation and output. In this sense, retrospective and prospective evaluations of political untrustworthiness are often perceptions of technical and functional incompetence.

This evaluative dimension of political distrust is sensitive to government performance and its political track record, but rests primarily on individual experiences and beliefs about the shortcomings of political agents. Yet, it is not the sole way citizens evaluate political untrustworthiness. Expressions of political distrust can carry an additional element, one that is intrinsically normative. Attitudes of distrust are expressions of the belief that there is something fundamentally wrong, unfair and unethical about the processes, intentions and/or outcomes produced by the political system. Political roles and government functions, being public functions, involve certain communal norms of 'right' behaviour and citizens' perceptions of untrustworthiness make a profound moral claim. Political distrust entails a negative evaluation of technical competence, but also a negative ethical evaluation of the political system. However, this evaluative dimension is not equivalent to the notion of 'moralistic' trust, that is, an individual's worldview regarding the trustworthiness of others, including political agents. It is still a dynamic and relational assessment of the political system and its agents that is extended retrospectively and prospectively highlighting the violation of shared normative values. It describes political actions, processes or outcomes that are in direct contrast to moral norms considered objective and commonly agreed upon by the political community. This important ethical aspect of distrusting attitudes transcends the preference framework of any one individual and provides an additional bond of each citizen to their political community.

It might not be surprising that in citizens' evaluations of their political system and its agents, moral norms play an important role. Earlier scholarly discussions of what constitutes a trustworthy government and 'good type' of politician identified qualities that have strong ethical dimensions: honesty, fairness, integrity and impartiality (Mansbridge, 2003). Without a doubt, it will be hard to find any citizen, or political scientist for that matter, who would argue that these are not desirable qualities in democratic governance. What has not been clearly identified so far is that attitudes of political distrust make a claim that condemns the violation of such ethical norms. Descriptions of political conduct that is perceived to be *wrong*, decisions that are *unjust*, processes and outcomes that are judged to be *unfair*, come

part and parcel with citizens' explanations of what constitutes political untrustworthiness. And although each citizen's evaluative and cognitive framework may give rise to a different outcome judgment regarding political agents, distrusting attitudes often lay claim to the violation of 'universal' ethical norms. Assessments of deception, bias, inequity, prejudice and manipulation all follow this dimension. Further, we could also consider that the normative framework of different political cultures or the same culture in different time-points may vary. Yet, the expressions of political distrust by citizens will continue to refer to political conduct that is in breach of ethical rules and accepted notions of fairness. Repeated instances of political dishonesty, such as being lied to or deceived, political processes that are systematically biased in favour of those in powerful positions or outcomes that impact the weaker members of a society are some examples of political untrustworthiness perceived through this evaluative dimension.

Corruption, bribery and cronyism are also examples of political conduct that carry strong ethical judgments and have been associated with high levels of political distrust. Pervasive corruption may have a serious impact on the effectiveness of a system and damages its capacity to function successfully, as it enhances the impression of incompetent and inadequate officials. Yet, it is the unfairness and unethical aspect of such practices which citizens refer to initially. The two perceptions of political untrustworthiness, technical failures and unethical conduct, are not mutually exclusive. They often follow similar directions and are intertwined. But it is also possible for citizens to arrive at distinct evaluations of the untrustworthiness of political agents or specific institutions. For example, we can think of a citizen who perceives their prime minister or other political leader to be competent and skilful, but who is at the same time perceived to be lacking in honesty and ethical qualities.

The third and final dimension we identify can similarly be intertwined with perceptions of technical and ethical untrustworthiness. This evaluative dimension is based on perceptions of incongruent interests between the citizen and the political system and its agents. Considerations of interests have been central to the analytical approach to trust as 'encapsulated interest', however transferring this notion to attitudes of political distrust is challenging. It is this aspect of political distrust where its relational nature comes most into play. This judgment is not a reflection of the functional qualities of political agents and the political system. Rather, it is the perception that the intentions, processes and outcomes of political agents contravene the citizen's personal interests and preferences. Citizens that

express political distrust often refer to incongruent interest between themselves and the political system or some of its agents. This aspect of distrusting attitudes becomes prominent in divided communities, partisan politics and divisive social issues.

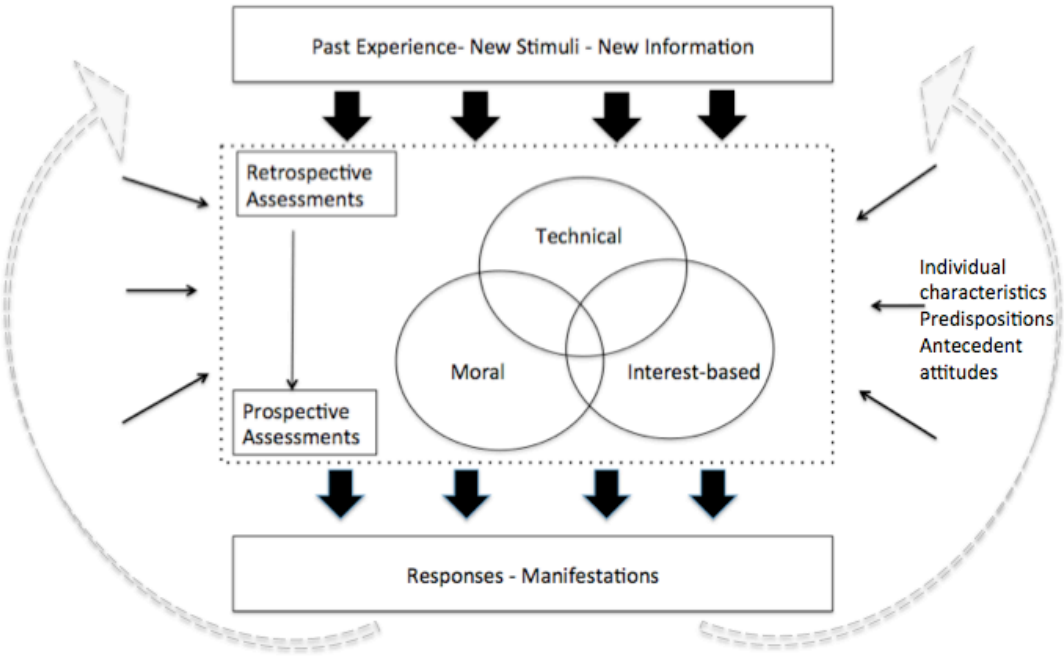
Citizens often perceive politics as a competitive arena where resources, values, and issue prioritisation are allocated based on a contest of interests and ideologies. Citizens may develop their own understanding of their best-interest, either on individual terms that encompass themselves and their family or even the social group they identify with in a pluralistic society. Expressing political distrust in this sense entails the belief that the interests of political agents are judged to be incongruent with those of the citizen. Retrospective and prospective assessments of diverging interests are part of political distrust attitudes, although again the outcome of these assessments and the process of identifying all actors' interests can vary from citizen to citizen. Social groups and political parties aid the process of aggregating individual interest and delineate in-groups and out-groups. These can be based on geographical terms, religious or class differences, or at the individual level on personal beliefs, ideology, professional and social standing. In existing studies of citizen trust in government, a consistent finding is that partisans express more distrust towards a government not run by their party. It is highly likely that they perceive that government as incompetent and pursuing policies that violate ethical norms, but their perception of untrustworthiness is primarily based on the belief that these political agents behave in a manner that harms their personal best interest. Other examples may include low skilled workers expressing distrust towards a system or administration that promotes economic migration or a health worker who distrusts a party that advocates less state support and cuts in the health sector.

Instances of political distrust based on diverging interests are expressed in more specific terms. Being able to identify the interests of political agents or the political system is not an easy task. Group identification provides some help in this regard and can inform perceptions of congruent and incongruent interests between citizens and political agents. However, it is important to note that this evaluative dimension of political distrust is not only relevant to parts of the political system, partisans, minorities, or specific agents. It can become a prominent aspect of distrusting attitudes when the political regime as a whole is perceived to pursue interests that are diverging from those of the citizenry. As mentioned earlier, populism thrives on a rhetoric that places political elites and the system on a contrasting path to the popular will and the citizens' best-interest. Similarly, a political class that is perceived as

disconnected and oblivious to the needs of the citizenry, or a system that fails to promote the voices and interests of large parts of the citizens, all consist of evaluations of political untrustworthiness.

The conceptual model of political distrust we formulate and advance throughout this thesis follows these aforementioned insights. We understand political distrust to involve retrospective and prospective assessments of the political system and to follow three types of evaluations based on perceptions of technical incompetence and procedural failure, perceptions of political conduct and outputs that violate ethical norms and perceptions of diverging interests between the citizen and political agents. The relationship between these three evaluative dimensions is more difficult to determine, as it may differ among individuals and the political agent being assessed or even the timing of the evaluation. This thesis aims to explore these relations further in subsequent chapters that analyse quantitative evidence. Here, we argue that these three evaluations of untrustworthy political conduct are not distinct types of political distrust. Ontologically, they represent aspects of distrusting attitudes motivated by different judgments, which may overlap, may be fused together and could be difficult to discern even for the citizen expressing them. Nevertheless, we believe that recognising that citizens use one or more of these underlying evaluations when deciding to distrust political agents marks a contribution to our understanding of political distrust and opens the way for further investigations into the structure and operation of citizen attitudes. Figure 2.1 below offers a graphical representation of the conceptual model of political distrust.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual model of political distrust



In addition to the three dimensions of evaluation and time projections entailed in attitudes of political distrust, we also consider that such attitudes are relevant to situations of risk and uncertainty and to the appropriate action that needs to be taken in relation to political agents. We argue that this is a fundamental conceptual part of political distrust and find empirical evidence for the particular response states (emotive and cognitive) embedded in expressions of distrust. Although behaviour in the context of this thesis is limited to citizen reports of behavioural intentions, we believe that these responses are part of what make attitudes of distrust a powerful concept in the study of political behaviour and merit further investigation.

Attitudes of distrust targeted at political agents indicate hostility, anger and disappointment and activate a search for ways to terminate interactions with those agents, bypassing them or replacing them with other agents. Attitudes of distrust towards the entire political system become more problematic, as citizens' search for ways to break up citizen-state interactions is nearly impossible, save for the decision to leave the country or become an outlaw. Citizen hostility and anger are not enough to mend the risk represented by interactions with an

untrustworthy political system. When insecurity, fear and even despair prevail, they may motivate different actions.

Finally, a conceptual model of political distrust would be incomplete without accounting for its cyclical and reciprocal nature. Reciprocity has been affirmed as a key characteristic of social and political trust relations. We have already argued that distrust exhibits similar cyclical and self-reinforcing characteristics that have the power to activate a vicious circle, acting both as its cause and effect. Given the multitude of ways in which political agents and processes impact the lives of citizens, distrust in particular creates incentives for citizens to become themselves untrustworthy. The existence of distrusting political attitudes impedes cooperation and interactions that could mitigate distrust, helping to develop more untrustworthy institutions and political processes that cannot operate effectively and cannot reach out to citizens to mend perceptions of untrustworthiness. Untrustworthy political agents feed distrusting citizen attitudes and distrusting attitudes feed political untrustworthiness, establishing relations of negative reciprocity.

2.5 Dimensions and spill-overs of distrust

The conceptual model of political distrust presented above was developed following conceptual work and the findings of exploratory empirical research aimed at investigating distrusting attitudes from the citizens' perspective. It identifies the meaning and underlying evaluations entailed in citizen attitudes of political distrust, as well as other conceptual characteristics, such as the dynamic and cyclical nature of distrust. So far, we have spoken of political distrust as an attitude held by a citizen in response to his political system, its parts or its agents. We consider that attitudes of distrust follow this model irrespective of whether they are targeted at specific institutions, governments, political groups or the political system as whole. The expectation of negative outcomes are based on assessments of technical failure, unethical conduct and incongruent interests influences the consideration of new evidence or stimuli and particular response mechanisms; this holds for all expressions of distrust.

The Eastonian model and subsequent theoretical research have emphasised the difference between distrust of specific incumbents and distrust of the political regime; however, the

distinction is not as clear or hierarchical when looking at citizen attitudes and empirics (Easton, 1975). Perceptions of untrustworthiness spill-over from one political object to another, from incumbents, to processes or institutions and vice versa, influencing evaluations of the political system at large. Receiving unfair treatment from one public service is likely to contribute to evaluations of other public services, even if you do not have information or first-hand experience of the qualities of system components. Assessments of political untrustworthiness can spill over from parts to the whole and from the whole to its parts. The separation of citizen orientations towards specific and diffuse political levels is a useful analytical distinction; however, attitudes of political distrust can be targeted either at specific parts of the political system, at the system as a whole, or both, and are much more intertwined than a strictly hierarchical framework would suggest. Distrust targeted at particular political agents, groups or institutions may motivate different emotive and behavioural responses than distrust in the political system, but the two are not fundamentally different attitudes. They follow the conceptual model outlined above, albeit with some evaluative dimensions being more prominent than others and some variation in the response mechanisms they trigger.

The discussion regarding the targets of political trust and distrust has caused considerable debates in the academic literature, yet we believe that the challenge in understanding citizen attitudes of political distrust do not so much lie in a failure to adequately identify the political target or the task for which they are distrusted (although doing so may put some of these debates to rest, see Miller, 1974a, 1974b; Citrin, 1974; Cook and Gronke, 2005; Langer, 2002). Rather, it stems from two complementary functions of political distrust: the perception of political untrustworthiness as outlined in the previous section and the heuristic mechanism that serves as a cognitive shortcut for evaluations of all political agents along various dimensions.

As discussed earlier, there are good theoretical reasons to believe that political distrust acts as a cognitive heuristic for assessing parts of the political system and guiding citizen decision-making in complex situations where information is costly and unwieldy (Hooghe and Marien, 2011; Hetherington and Rudolph, 2015). At the same time, as an evaluative attitude, political distrust is grounded in the processing of available information, evidence and experiences, and hence is open to change during one's political life to reflect such perceptions. This conceptualisation of distrusting attitudes provides a dynamic model of distrust, whereby all

the information and underlying reasoning is available to citizens to explain their attitudes and decision-making. Yet given that citizens are to a great extent 'cognitive missers', that is, they are disinclined or unable to gather sufficient knowledge regarding every political agent, attitudes of distrust also act as a heuristic mechanism (Hooghe, 2011).

It is important to acknowledge both of these functions of political distrust in the development of a conceptual model. Our exploratory research indicates that attitudes may function in both ways. Citizens can evaluate different aspects of untrustworthy and trustworthy qualities and different parts of their political system in ways that show they consider and prioritise different information, but evaluations are also affected by overall beliefs about the qualities of the political system. All of these aspects are at play and all of them provide insights into the way in which political distrust operates. Following the operationalisation and collection of quantitative evidence based on this model of political distrust, we seek to explore the internal structure and function of distrusting attitudes in greater depth through additional data and analyses.

2.6 Towards conceptual clarity: Political distrust and related concepts

Finally, this section is devoted to clarifying the relationship between political distrust and related notions. Conceptual and empirical studies of political distrust have been plagued by a profusion of related concepts. Already, within the key theoretical approaches in political science, political distrust is discussed in terms of trust, but also of alienation, disaffection and political support. It is clear that the significance of distrusting attitudes in the realm of politics lies in their association with these phenomena and the types of political behaviour they motivate. Nevertheless, to date there has been no effort to distinguish political distrust from other competing notions and provide a conceptualisation of distrusting attitudes that can clarify those associations.

This problem of having a plethora of competing concepts (as well as operationalisations and indicators) is something that every researcher in the field of citizen attitudes towards politics has to face (Levi and Stoker, 2000; Craig, 1993; Nye et al., 1997; Mishler and Rose, 1997). Following the presentation of the conceptual model in the previous sections, the next task is

to disentangle political distrust from other notions and clarify the way in which it is associated with other key attitudes. Part of the confusion in the study of political distrust has its source in this wealth of concepts, which has led political scientists to often talk (and write) past each other. In the final section of this chapter, we clarify the conceptual differences between attitudes of political distrust and trust, the notion of political cynicism and discuss key concepts that are associated with distrusting attitudes and used in subsequent analyses of empirical data.

This study began by challenging the assumption that trust and distrust are mirroring concepts in a single continuum and that the lack of one equals the presence of the other. The conceptual model presented in this chapter is focused on distrusting political attitudes and was informed from theoretical and empirical work. During this work we find that people often think and reason about trust and distrust together in politics, yet that there are differences in the role of retrospective judgments, the moral aspect of distrust, as well as the distinctive emotive responses that accompany distrusting judgments. These aspects and the fact that distrusting attitudes capture negative orientations towards political agents and the political system, distinguish distrust from trust and the neutral or ambivalent position that reflects neither positive nor negative orientations, that is lack of trust. Therefore, we argue that conceptually the three notions form part of a continuum, where trust occupies the positive pole, distrust the negative pole and there is a clear neutral area in between the two, as long as we separate them and recognize that distrust and trust are not symmetrical notions. Measuring this continuum empirically and identifying the cut-off points presents additional challenges to which we return and discuss in more detail in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

Focusing on citizens' negative political orientations, earlier definitions of political distrust conflated distrusting political attitudes with the notion of political cynicism (Miller, 1974a; Abramson, 1983; Abramson and Finifter, 1981). Political cynicism reflects a negative attitude that is rooted in deeply-held beliefs of the 'inherent evilness' of politicians and the entire political system (Schyns et al., 2004). However, political distrust depends on the assessment of political agents according to some evaluative criteria. Cynicism is a personal stance towards the political system irrespective of the agent, group or process that it is directed to. In this way, it is better understood as a characteristic of the citizen and not a function of the trustworthy or untrustworthy qualities of the political system (Dekker, 2006).

Without a doubt, political distrust and cynicism are positively associated and even causally connected, although the arrow of causality can be theorised to run in either direction. Repeated interactions with the political system that leave citizens betrayed or worse off can build up and contribute to a cynical view of the entire democratic system (Capella and Jameson, 1997). Similarly, early socialisation and experiences that have little to do with political exchanges may also foster a cynical worldview at the individual level, which is then extended to one's political life and could motivate distrusting attitudes. Nevertheless, the two concepts are distinct. If we are to maintain the notion of political distrust as a relational and evaluative attitude that depends on the behaviour and attributes of the political agents being evaluated, it needs to be distinguished from the notion of political cynicism.

The politically distrusting are not necessarily cynical or alienated citizens, even if the cynical and alienated often express attitudes of political distrust. Considering the conceptual model of distrust advanced in this thesis, we expect that cynical attitudes will be associated with all evaluative dimensions of political untrustworthiness, especially perceptions of moral misconduct and incongruent interests between the citizen and the political system. A cynical view of politics should also be associated equally with retrospective and prospective expressions of political untrustworthiness, as there is no reason to hope or believe that the future might hold any 'wiggling room' for political changes.

Recent anti-establishment sentiments, political disatisfaction and discourse that captures citizens' belief in the 'evilness' of the political system has also become the focus of the scholarly study of populist attitudes (Akkerman et al; 2014; Hawkins et al., 2012). With populist rhetoric and political actors on the rise across European established democracies and beyond, it is useful to point to some conceptual similarities and differences with this burgeoning field of studies. A popular anti-elitist sentiment is often echoed in the moral negative evaluations of distrusting judgments and may have a similar basis to the populist's proclamation of a malevolent political elite that deceives and takes advantage of the people. Nevertheless, populist attitudes also rest on a Manichean view of politics and the belief in a 'good' people with a homogenous will (Castano-Silva et al. 2016) that is not equal to the interest-based based dimension of distrust, which recognises personal and group interests in a pluralist society. Undoubtedly, populist discourse often capitalises on existing sentiments of political distrust in order to further its ideological worldview (which can be of the political

right or left) and finds fruitful grounds in the case of dissatisfaction stemming from incongruent interests between a citizen and the political establishment in its entirety. Citizens more prone to populist sentiments and are expected to be distrustful of the existing political elite and institutions, but they are also more likely to reject the view of a pluralistic society and the need for protection of minorities and to ascribe to the idea of a strong leader that promotes the 'will of the people' (Werner et al., 2016). In this sense, populism may depart from distrust when citizens express grievances towards the current system but do not hold such views about the political community.

Political efficacy is a related concept that has also been brought under scholarly scrutiny. Although seldom conflated with distrust conceptually, its definition and operationalisation in relation to political distrust have caused confusion. The early definitions of political efficacy describe it as the feeling that an individual's political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process (Craig et al., 1990). Due to its theoretical links to citizen participation and mobilisation, a series of empirical studies focused on efficacious and inefficacious attitudes and went on to identify two dimensions of political efficacy. The term 'internal political efficacy' was used to refer to one's confidence in their ability to understand, participate and influence political processes, and included survey questions that inquired after citizens' perceptions of their own place and competence in politics (Robinson et al., 1991). The term 'external political efficacy' was used to refer to one's beliefs regarding the responsiveness of political institutions and authorities to potential citizen action. The latter notion of external efficacy was mainly identified through survey items that tapped into evaluations of the political system and significantly overlapped with survey measures of political trust (Citrin and Muste, 1999; Schyns et al., 2008). According to our conceptualisation of distrust, these evaluations of the responsiveness of the political system are included in assessments of incongruent interests or unethical conduct and contribute to distrust. In order to avoid a tautology between political distrust and external political inefficacy, which would both rest on perceptions of the system's responsiveness, the most helpful way of thinking about political efficacy is as feelings of internal efficacy.

Gamson's mistrustful-efficacious hypothesis for active participation focused on those citizens that are aggrieved by political processes, and therefore have cause for participating in politics, but who also believe their actions can have an impact. The association between political distrust and efficacy however is more nuanced. In most empirical studies those who

are politically efficacious also tend not to register negative attitudes towards the political system (Sigelman and Feldman, 1983). It is difficult to disentangle the extent to which political distrust influences feelings of efficacy and feelings of efficacy influence attitudes of distrust. Though causal arguments fall outside the scope of this thesis, our interest in the association between political efficacy and distrust remains, as both concepts are important in the study of political behaviour, especially types of behaviour that have to do with political participation. We could expect that feelings of inefficacy would be associated more strongly with political distrust based on ethical and interest assessments, given that a citizen that feels unable to understand or influence political processes is also likely to believe these processes are not in line with his best interests and that the political system is not operating as it ought to.

Thinking about feelings of political efficacy opens the door to a number of individual level traits and characteristics such as education, political interest and political knowledge, which can also influence political distrust (or even be influenced by distrusting attitudes). For political knowledge in particular, we can theorise both a negative and a positive association with attitudes of political distrust. We have already referred to the 'winner's hypothesis', which suggests that increased levels of information and knowledge, which ordinarily come hand in hand with higher levels of education and socioeconomic status, are negatively associated with political distrust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011; Uslaner, 2011; Scheidegger and Staerklé, 2011). In other words, those people with lower status in a society, who are worse off and find themselves on the losing side of political competition, are more likely to distrust political agents and the system as a whole. However the opposite association between information or knowledge and political distrust could also be at play, given that high levels of knowledge regarding the competencies, track-record and processes of a political system increase the likelihood of identifying aspects that render political agents untrustworthy. Similarly, the theory on the rise of critical citizens or the cognitive mobilisation thesis would suggest that increased access to information and higher levels of political knowledge are precisely the reason why citizens are adopting a more critical assessment of political performance, therefore leading to more sceptical attitudes (Norris, 1999; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). It is also important to recognise that attitudes of political distrust may also influence levels of political knowledge as much as the opposite way around, given that political knowledge is something that is continuously sought (or avoided) throughout one's lifetime.

It has already been mentioned that citizen attitudes of political distrust are particularly important in the study of political science due to their link to political behaviour. Distrust may motivate non-compliance and protest against untrustworthy institutions and processes in order to stimulate corrective action, but it may also lead to non-compliance with legitimate policies, opposition to political processes that legitimise the system and support for alternative regime types (Braithwaite and Levi, 1998). Earlier research into political disaffection and discontent has focused on institutional and non-institutional modes of political participation, suggesting that increased distrust may motivate citizens to engage in unconventional types of participation, such as signing petitions and demonstrating, while it decreases their involvement in institutional processes, such as elections and party campaigns. Given the changing nature of political action and nature of distrusting attitudes, we believe investigating political action that contributes to political processes and action that is primarily disruptive is more relevant for this study.

A big part of the research investigating the link between political distrust and citizen behaviour has focused on the specific action of electoral participation and electoral choice. Most studies support the theory that trusting citizens are more likely to participate in politics through voting, while distrusting citizens are more likely not to participate, cast blank votes, or in the case of multiparty elections, vote for non-systemic, extremist or smaller parties (Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2014; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005; Hooghe et al., 2011; Miller and Listhaug, 1990). The emphasis on electoral participation is warranted given the fact that abstention or non-participation in the electoral process erodes the effectiveness and legitimacy of the democratic system and might lead to political instability over time. We are particularly interested in the association between political distrust and the intention to abstain from elections or cast a blank vote, as much as deciding to support an extremist or radical party. All three acts of electoral behaviour can be considered disruptive for the democratic process of voting and we expect that perceptions of untrustworthiness based on ethical and interest-based assessments will contribute to this type of behaviour. A belief that the system violates shared norms of fairness must add to citizens' disenchantment with the political process and their unwillingness to participate. Similarly, key political agents that pursue interests that run contrary to a citizen's best-interest may turn someone away from the electoral process or towards radical political parties.

Finally, we are also interested in action that could be considered constructive for political processes, since both theoretical expectations and empirical evidence suggest that distrusting citizens are in fact more likely to participate in non-institutionalised political actions, such as signing petitions or attending demonstrations (Marien and Hooghe, 2013; Kaase, 1999; Marien et al., 2010). We want to explore which aspects of distrusting judgments promote active citizenship, such as demonstrating peacefully and joining political organisations, either non-governmental, pressure groups or existing political parties. It might be the case for example that distrust based on distinct assessments or formulated in retrospective or prospective projections motivates political action in different ways.

Before presenting the findings of the empirical research carried out for this thesis, the following chapter explains in detail the research design and methodological choices made at each step of the research project. The research question addressed by the thesis necessitates an alternative approach to the study of political distrust, as it cannot rely on the available survey data or existing indicators. Survey data alone cannot provide an insight into what citizens are thinking or what they are evaluating when they express political distrust. At the same time quantitative data are extremely useful and offer a multitude of opportunities to analyse and investigate the structure and associations of distrusting attitudes. The empirical chapters of the thesis explore the nature of political distrust attitudes and advance the conceptual model presented above

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Overarching research design: Mixed methodological approach
3.2 Case selection, language and national context
3.3 Qualitative research: Exploring the meaning of political distrust
3.4 Quantitative research: Operationalisation, measurement and the analysis of survey data
3.5 Summary of methodologies and conclusion

This chapter presents the research design guiding this thesis and explains why a mixed methods approach is necessary to address its core research question. It employs a sequential mixed methods design, whereby the first part of the research consists in the collection and analysis of qualitative empirical evidence and informs the second part, consisting of quantitative data analysis derived from a new measure of political distrust attitudes. Popular narrative interviews provide empirical evidence to address the question of meaning and the conceptual status of political distrust for citizens. Interview data offer a wealth of information on how citizens think about, express and explain their distrust in politics. This information is analysed and used to build the conceptual model of distrusting political attitudes presented in the preceding chapter. Empirical research conducted in three national contexts – rather than a single one – allows us to consider the variation that exists among individuals and among national contexts. More importantly, we can identify common themes and patterns of operation that reflect human behaviour, and could potentially be generalised beyond the contexts studied here. Italy, the UK and Greece provide fertile ground for the study of distrusting attitudes towards politics, and despite their different historical trajectories and political cultures, expressions of distrust studied in all three contexts are found to follow similar patterns.

In the second stage of the research design, qualitative empirical analysis feeds into the conceptual model of distrust and the exercise of operationalising and measuring this attitudinal concept. The latter part of this chapter presents all the methodological choices made in the process of deriving a measure for political distrust and important information regarding the survey that provides this study with original quantitative data. Survey data, derived from an online respondent sample in the UK, allows us to investigate the internal structure of distrusting attitudes using multivariate statistical analysis, and to further explore

associations between other political attitudes, individual characteristics or behavioural intentions and political distrust. These analyses further advance our conceptual understanding of distrust and contribute a new measure and original data to study the operation, not only of political distrust, but of each evaluative part of distrusting attitudes.

3.1 Overarching research design: Mixed methodological approach

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, part of the trouble with political distrust research is related to the conceptualisation and methodological operationalisation of the concepts of trust and distrust. In this chapter we present our research design and methodological choices in order to address the research questions guiding this thesis; "What is political distrust?" Specifically, we seek to investigate what citizens mean when claiming to distrust politics and political actors based on empirical evidence, and to map how distrusting judgments take form in the minds of citizens. Further, we present a theoretically and empirically informed model explicating the operation of political distrust judgments. Finally, we want to determine whether we can capture political distrust in a quantitative survey following this operationalisation and make further contributions regarding the structure and operation of political distrust to the scholarly debate.

The academic study of citizens' political distrust has received increased attention in theoretical studies, yet empirical projects have almost entirely focused on existing survey measures of political trust. To our knowledge, there has been no measure dedicated to the study of political distrust from the outset following an operationalisation and measurement process, which presents a potential first point of conflict in understanding and interpreting political distrust. Most existing empirical studies into the nature, causes and effects of political distrust rely on survey data following the standardised operationalisation of trust found in national and transnational surveys. In European based surveys and other large-scale comparative survey research (Eurobarometer surveys, European Social Survey, World and European Values Survey, European Election Studies and many national election studies in European countries), multiple items ask respondents how much trust or confidence they have in different political institutions, but leave the definition and interpretation of trust to each

individual respondent; in the United States, four items touching on different dimensions of trust have been used in American National Election Studies (ANES) since the 1960s.[9]

Nevertheless, using such indicators could never help us determine what citizens are thinking of when expressing distrust and what distrusting their political systems really means for them. In addition, none of the existing measurement efforts was aimed at capturing attitudes of distrust. They focused on measuring trust 'by intuition', or in the North American case it was even doubtful what these items were created to measure in the first place. Nevertheless, both have the evident benefit that comes with any well-established and continuously used survey indicator. Researchers have inexpensive access to reliable data of representative samples that are necessary to monitor trends and allow for time and country comparisons. Many scholars have lamented the fact that once measures are used repeatedly in national and multinational surveys they provide a benchmark for comparisons, and therefore any alteration, even if it serves to improve an otherwise bad indicator, is very hard to achieve, since it would mean 'losing' information from previous years. The criticisms of both measures vary and have occupied the political trust literature on both sides of the Atlantic. In their 2000 review of the field, Levi and Stoker concluded: "In one sense then, we have yet to question whether all of this research is really about trust or trustworthiness at all" (Levi and Stoker, 2000: 483). The NES measure of political trust attempts to tap into the different aspects of trusting judgments, yet it has been criticised for failing to distinguish between diffuse and specific support, leading to the often quoted Citrin-Miller debate regarding incumbent versus systemic evaluations (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974a, 1974b). In the European tradition, the most widely used measure of political trust does distinguish between different institutional players, politicians and the national government, but leaves two questions unanswered: "What is it that we are truly measuring?" and "Are we measuring the same notion in each national context?" (Levi and Stoker, 2000; Fisher et al., 2010; Hooghe, 2011). Adding to this puzzle the interchangeable use measures of institutional confidence, it seems that despite lengthy analyses of political distrust trends and investigation into their causes, we do not really know what it means for a citizen to distrust her government, politicians, political institutions or the entire political system.

[9] See Appendix A for the exact phrasing of the most widely used political trust survey indicators.

Therefore, the current state of research in political distrust and the questions guiding the present research project require a methodological approach that incorporates qualitative and quantitative study. Although mixed methodology has been on the rise in the last decade there is limited employment of this powerful research approach to be found in the study of political behaviour, whether due to the historical distinction of epistemological paradigms or practical considerations for publishing (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003).[10] Nevertheless, it is clear that contested concepts such as distrust and trust can benefit from in-depth qualitative insights as well as quantitative study (Bruter, 2005). The beginning of mixed methods research in the social sciences dates back to the 1980s and 1990s, when groups of researchers from sociology, education, and management evaluation created independent works describing this methodological approach. Its motivation has remained the assertion that "the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (Creswell and Clark, 2007: 5).

Using a more descriptive view of mixed methods research entails an orientation that consists of "multiple ways of seeing and hearing, and of multiple ways of making sense of the social world" (Greene, 2007: 20). We find this especially apt for the study of social-psychological constructs. The methodological literature on attitude measurement also stresses the importance of early exploratory work that will allow researchers to understand the latent construct they will attempt to measure quantitatively, although this exploratory work could consist of solely reviewing the literature, not necessarily conducting extensive qualitative work (DeVellis, 2012; Vogt et al., 2004; Oppenheim, 1992; Oskamp and Schultz, 2005). The present research project is not simply a scale-development exercise. It is an in-depth study of political distrust as an attitude area and it seeks to address questions of meaning, judgment formation and operationalisation in order to build a conceptual model of distrust and provide empirical evidence to support it. The nature of the research question demands a mixed methods approach, as it cannot be adequately understood or fruitfully addressed using only qualitative or quantitative research. Studying political distrust using quantitative studies without a clear idea of what existing measures are capturing, or in fact, what they ought to capture would – at the very least – be ineffective. Empirical qualitative research allows us to

[10] For a comprehensive overview on the development and controversies in mixed methods research, see Creswell (2013: 269-284).

access meaning and better understand the function of distrust judgments (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). It can inform the conceptual model and operationalisation of political distrust, yet it is limiting in the types of inferences one can make about the associations and structures of distrusting attitudes. Since attitudes of political distrust are theoretically significant for diffuse support and the democratic quality of a political system, they are attitudes political scientists are interested in measuring at large, in order to analyse their internal structure using multivariate statistical tools and their associations with other political attitudes and behaviours, as well as to monitor across societies and across time. With its inevitably limited and specific sample under study, this thesis can only argue for the generalizability of its findings to a certain extent. A survey measure of political distrust based on the conceptual model above can provide data that will enhance our understanding of the operations of political distrust. In the context of the present thesis we analyse quantitative evidence from a single country, it still allows us to investigate the properties of distrusting attitudes through statistical analyses and draw conclusions on the basis of a UK sample.

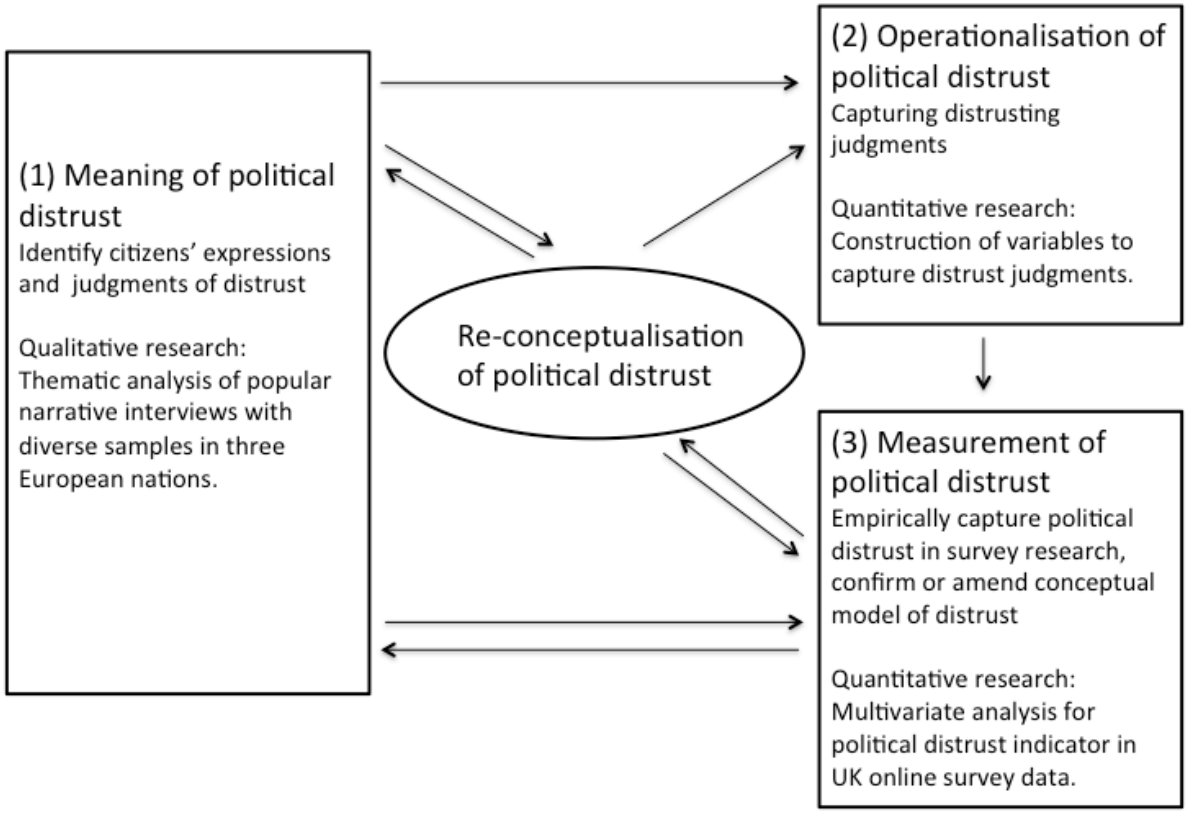
At this point it is necessary to note that the use of the terms 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' in this section refers to the methods of data collection and analysis of empirical evidence. Despite some criticism of these terms due to the epistemological paradigms they have been attached to, in the case of political behaviour research both methods are acceptable, or even necessary for addressing fundamental questions about psychological constructs (Giddings and Grant, 2006). In the epistemological paradigm debate, mixed methods research offers a third alternative of pragmatism,[11] arguing that the quantitative and qualitative approaches are compatible and in some cases should be used in conjunction (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Howe, 1988).

This research project follows a sequential mixed methods design, presented in Figure 3.1 below. Sequential mixed designs focus on the incorporation of findings and results into a conceptual framework and subsequent research phases aimed at providing answers to the research question (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell, 2013). The following sections of this chapter will explain in more detail the specifics of each research phase, beginning with popular narrative interviews conducted in three European countries and the qualitative

[11] Pragmatism, as understood by Greene (2007) and others, leads to social inquiry focused on problem-solving and action that is committed to facilitating progress in a scientific field. For a lengthier discussion on the paradigm of mixed methods research see Greene (2007), Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) and Howe (1988).

analysis of empirical evidence used to develop the conceptual model of political distrust judgments. The second section uses these insights achieved through qualitative research to inform the conceptualisation and operationalisation of political distrust and to construct variables to be employed in quantitative research. Finally, the measure of political distrust is used in a UK survey, and multivariate statistical analysis of the survey data is used to further explore the function of political distrust judgments as represented by our model, investigate additional properties of distrust attitudes and assess the contribution of the measure to survey research.

Figure 3.1: Methodological integration of the project following a sequential mixed methods design



Although the sequential mixed strategy involves a "first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data and analysis that *builds* on the results of the first qualitative phase" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007: 211), in reality, as the

multiple arrows in Figure 3.1 show, insights from the qualitative and quantitative phases of research help illuminate each other and the overarching conceptualisation of political distrust. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research can boost the credibility of findings and aid in explaining surprising results after all data have been collected, allowing for triangulation of findings (Bryman, 2012; Johnson et al., 2007).

3.2 Case selection, language and national contexts

Social science research often rests on a restricted number or areas of observations. Nevertheless, a transparent selection process of cases and participants guided by the research aim of the project can provide the basis for a fruitful social scientific inquiry (King et al., 1994; Creswell, 2009). The objective of this study is to understand political distrust judgments, to offer a conceptual model for their operation and to create an indicator that captures citizen attitudes of political distrust based on this model for further analysis. Therefore, the selection of countries for the first step of the research project is motivated by the pervasiveness and range of distrusting citizen attitudes to be found in the realm of politics. Earlier research in political culture has identified distrusting citizen attitudes towards the political class as a salient topic in Britain despite its long-standing democratic institutions and the older observations of cultural deference towards politicians has been replaced by hostility (Hart, 1978; Almond and Verba, 1980; Hay, 2007; Stoker, 2011). In Greece, distrust of politicians and political institutions is fast increasing since the great recession spilled over and exposed the country's poor public financial situation in 2010. Democratic institutions have often struggled to establish efficient and transparent processes to serve citizens, yet in the democratic era following 1974 political parties managed to provide a link between citizens and politics and enjoyed an unprecedented surge of citizen confidence in their governance role, which has now been reversed (Vasilopoulou et al., 2014; Armingeon and Guthmann, 2014; Featherstone, 2005). Similarly, Italian citizens have often grappled with an oversized political system, in which it is extremely difficult to enact change. People around the country and especially in the south tend to report very negative evaluations of their political institutions and politicians, and often resort to interpersonal or other cooperative networks to make up for the lack of security and efficiency in getting things done (Almond and Verba, 1963; Gambetta, 1988; Putnam, 1993; Schyns and Koop, 2010). The

two graphs below trace Eurobarometer trends for 'trust in national parliament' and 'trust in national government' in the three countries relative to the EU average, showing lack of trust is consistently high.[12]

Figure 3.2: Percentage of citizens that 'tend not to trust' their national government

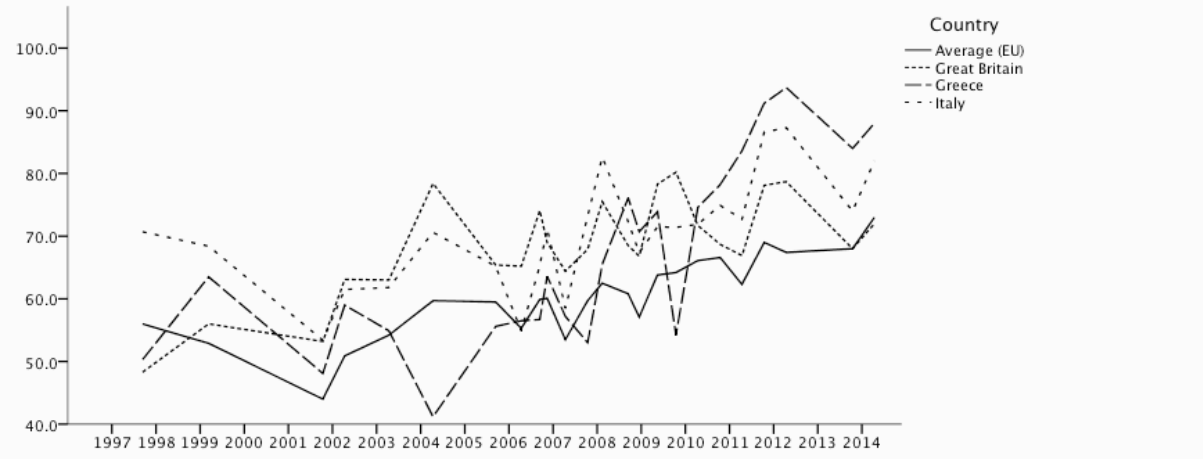
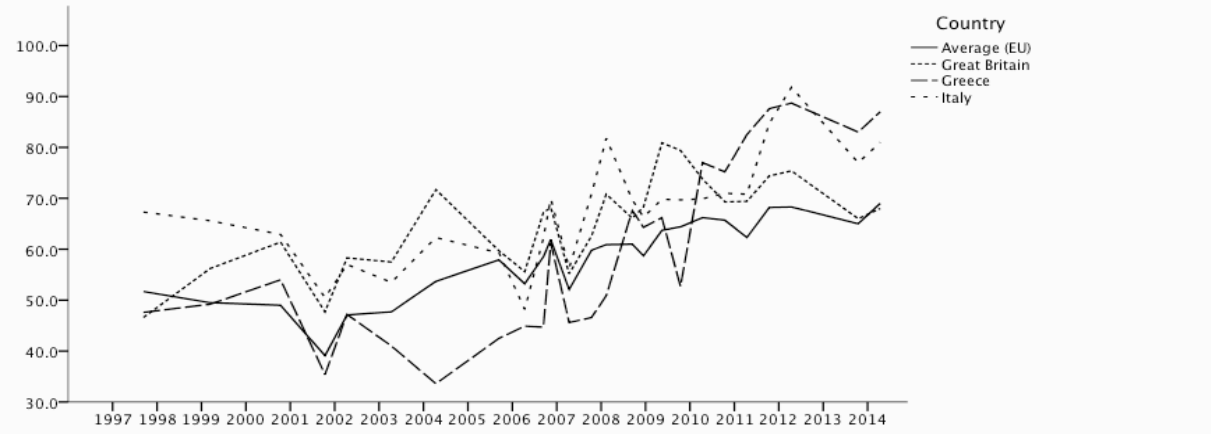


Figure 3.3: Percentage of citizens that 'tend not to trust' their national parliament



Note: EU Average includes all member states after European enlargement. Source: Eurobarometers 48-81.

A number of other countries in Europe could have provided fertile ground for the study of political distrust, such as the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, existing research of political attitudes in these national contexts has shown that the communist experience and subsequent transition has shaped the way citizens relate and evaluate the state as well as their community in a fundamental way (Mishler and Rose, 1997,

[12] Although the three national political contexts have been studied separately and comparatively through historical case studies, representative survey data on citizens' political trust became available through Eurobarometer surveys only in 1997.

2001). Britain, Italy and Greece represent nations from a relatively homogenous group of Western European established democracies, which present variation in their historic trajectories, political culture and institutional culture characteristics.[13] Furthermore, relying on three different national contexts for the qualitative phase of this research project, instead of a single case, provides extensive information on the meaning and operation of political distrust to support the conceptual model and operationalisation of distrusting judgments. The selection of Britain, Italy and Greece is an appropriate strategy for the first phase of the research, leading to the second step of quantitative data on a new measure of political distrust with a UK sample. Although this is not an ideal reduction in the geographical breadth of the research, it was an inevitable limitation that comes alongside the scope and resources of doctoral work. The UK is still a national context where citizen attitudes of political distrust remain in the spotlight, providing a first test for the conceptual model of political distrust and the new survey indicator created.

3.2 Political context, language and culture

Before moving on to present the specifics of each methodological strategy, the next paragraphs offer a brief observational account of the contextual, linguistic and cultural differences encountered in the study of political distrust, which will help less familiar readers situate the findings presented in the following chapters. In Italy, the early 1990s saw the overturning of the party system and the entire political status quo since the end of the Second World War through the 'clean hands' scandal, which exposed widespread and deep-seated corruption among the political class, close ties with the Mafia and abuse of power.[14] This gave rise to a two bloc party system, where a centre-left bloc led by the 'Partito Democratico' (PD) competed and exchanged power with a centre-right bloc led by 'Forza Italia' (followed by 'Popolo della Liberta', PdL). The centre-right and much of Italian politics of the past two decades has been dominated by the figure of Silvio Berlusconi, a media owner and businessman who established a firm grip on the country's political scene despite recurrent scandals and allegations of political corruption. Following the wave of financial turmoil that

[13] See Appendix B for more information on the three countries.
[14] For more information on the 'clean hands' scandal see Gundle and Parker (1995) and Della Porta and Vannucci (1999).

shook peripheral European countries, a technocratic government led by Mario Monti was put in place in late 2011 to implement reforms and austerity measures that would rehabilitate public finances. At the time of fieldwork, the majority of Italians had turned their back on the technocratic experience, resentful of increased taxation and austerity measures. The inconclusive elections of February 2013 saw an entirely new anti-systemic political party 'M5S', led by a television comedian Beppe Grillo, capture the frustration of millions of Italians across the country with the state of the political system and receive 25.5% of the vote. The on-going coalition talks in the summer of 2013, between the centre-left (PD) and centre-right blocks (PdL), which became the only possibility for government formation, and the political bargaining over the nomination of a prime minister further frustrate those citizens who had been hit hard by the economic crisis and were looking for an end to uncertainty and for quick reforms. In addition, in the summer of 2013, Silvio Berlusconi was on trial pending economic charges for tax-fraud (not personal scandal). The trial's development and verdict was at the forefront of every public discussion across the country, adding to citizens' exposure to political corruption.

Greece has followed a different political trajectory in its modern history. Following a seven year military junta from 1967-1974, in the democratic *metapoliteusi* era both main political parties, the socialist 'Pasok' and the conservative 'New Democracy', attempted to put Greece on the road to modernisation and integration with Europe. Although early EU and Eurozone memberships were achieved, the political class failed to create independent services and it institutionalised clientelistic practices in every aspect of the public domain. The relatively young democratic institutions have proven to be impervious to systemic reform, even in the period of economic growth and prosperity following the introduction of the common currency. In the 2000s Greek citizens seemed to be catching up with the rest of Western Europe in levels of satisfaction with their democracy and indeed trust in their political institutions and government.[15] However, the recent financial crisis exposed Greece as the weakest economic link in the European chain and from 2010 the country has entered into multiple programmes of financial assistance from the European Commission, ECB and IMF, which included the imposition of harsh austerity measures and conditions of structural reform. These political developments, along with plummeting socio-economic indicators,

[15] For a longer discussion on the institutional successes and failures of the *metapoliteusi* era see Featherstone (1990, 2005) and Pappas (2013).

caused extensive changes to the political party system. Following a provisional coalition government with a technocrat prime minister between 2011-2012, the former centre-left socialist party Pasok, which had governed for more than 20 years since 1974, almost disappeared from the electoral map. A formerly marginal small radical left-wing party 'SYRIZA', pursuing a populist anti-austerity agenda, found support and emerged as the main opposition party to a coalition government following elections in 2012 (heading a governing coalition since January 2015). On the far-right side of the political party spectrum, the fringe extreme-right party 'Golden Dawn', with neo-Nazi and nationalistic rhetoric, increased its popular appeal and consolidated itself in Parliament with 7%-8% of the national vote. At the time of fieldwork in the summer-autumn of 2013, Greek citizens had already been exposed to three years of plummeting socio-economic indicators and harsh austerity measures imposed by their national government and the Troika of international institutions (European Commission, ECB, IMF). The economy was a central preoccupation for citizens across the country, but equally central was the political upheaval that broke ties between citizens and the political parties they had supported and relied on for four decades. In this respect, considerations of blame and responsibility for the state of the country were popular in public discourse. The extreme-right 'Golden Dawn' party also featured in media and public discussions, although fieldwork took place prior to the legal detainment and prosecution of Golden Dawn MPs.[16]

At first glance, the political experiences of citizens in England have been markedly different than the two Southern European countries. Britain has been considered a case where the long history of democratic institutions and citizen deference form a solid basis for a thriving civic culture. Yet, scholars have highlighted the existence of critical citizenship and political distrust in parts of Britain as far back as the 1880s (Hart, 1978). Despite stable politics, citizens in England have been widely critical of their political elites and institutions, and increasingly disaffected and disengaged from political processes, leading many scholars to sound the alarm over the state of democratic politics in the country.[17] The perceived detachment of political elites from the rest of the population and the revelations of political abuse of power, from the parliamentary expenses scandal in 2010 to the inquiry into the Iraq war, have contributed to a public discourse of mistrust, although this had not led to rapid

[16] For more information on Golden Dawn and the rise of extremist and populist rhetoric in Greece following the financial crisis see Vasilopoulou, Halikiopoulou and Exadaktylos (2014).
[17] For a longer discussion on the current state of citizen attitudes towards the political system see Stoker (2011) and Hay (2009).

change in the political or party systems in the way seen in Italy and Greece. Some scholars argue that the last two general elections in the UK showed signs of change. Despite the first-past-the-post majoritarian electoral system, following the 2010 elections the Conservative Party had to form a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats, who won 23% of the vote (57 out of 650 seats) and challenged the definition of the UK as a two-party system. At the time of fieldwork in late 2013, the performance of the coalition government was a salient political subject, but mainly because of the disappointment in the Liberal Democratic Party not to fulfill their electoral promises. Challenges to the party system also came from strong nationalist sentiments in Scotland, where despite the rejection of independence in the 2015 independence referendum, the Scottish National Party swept Scotland's constituencies at the general election later that year and came out with 56 seats in Westminster. Pressure was also mounted by rising anti-European and anti-immigration sentiments, articulated by the right-wing UK Independence Party (UKIP). Still, public discussions at the time of fieldwork were centred expectedly on economic issues, such as taxation and benefits and the salient topic of immigration from within and outside the European Union. The ongoing political turmoil in Syria and potential military involvement discussed in parliament and in the media throughout 2013 also resurfaced sentiments and reactions from the last UK military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The historical and current political context certainly influences public discourse on political matters, but so does language. In a subtler, yet impactful way, language shapes discussions and expressions of political attitudes, as well as the way in which people formulate thoughts and create meaning. The following paragraph offers only a brief account of the linguistic heritage the notions under investigation carry in the three national contexts studied. This is part of a larger and much richer discussion in semantics, yet for the purposes of this study exploring citizen aptitudes of political distrust, such information may help the reader better appreciate the expressions of distrust presented and analysed in the following chapters.

In the English language the words mistrust and distrust provide an etymological equivalent for the concept we wish to capture; that is, the negative spectrum of political attitudes of trust, and not simply the lack thereof. The two words may not be used as readily as the affirmative of trust in everyday language, yet context often helps determine whether the emphasis is placed on the negative expectations of the speaker, or on a lack of conviction in determining trustworthiness. On the other hand, the Greek and Italian languages present a

different story for the use of 'trust' and 'distrust'. Firstly, the two terms are etymologically connected to and derived from the words 'belief' or 'faith'. *Δυσπιστία*, the Greek noun for distrust, is formed from the combination of the negating prefix '*δυσ-*'and '*πίστη*', meaning 'faith' or 'belief'. Trust is formed by the pronoun "*εν-*" and '*πίστη*' (faith) to make "εμπιστοσύνη", meaning to place your faith in something or someone. Yet this translation of trust and distrust only works for nouns. When using a verb to denote the act of trusting, '*εμπιστεύομαι'* (I trust), there is no counterpart verb that denotes distrust, only its negation, *'δεν εμπιστεύομαι'* (I do not trust). Similarly, distrust in the Italian language is derived from the negating prefix '*s-*' and '*fiducia*', meaning 'faith'. *La sfiducia* is a commonly used noun for distrust, yet it does not transform to a verb. People will use the term '*avere fiducia*' (to have trust) or its negation "*non avere fiducia*" (to not have trust) to express their decision to approach political agents with trust or distrust.

Two important points follow from these linguistic particularities. Firstly, political distrust is linked to the concept of faith, at least in terms of its etymological roots. Although there are no remnant traces of religious connotations, faith and belief are by definition powerful concepts that are not only dependent on rational calculation. They are called upon to bridge uncertainty and mitigate risk about the future in the same way that modern scholarship conceptualises trust and distrust. Losing one's faith and establishing a predisposition of disbelief in politics represent a serious rupture in citizen-state relations that is difficult to mend. Regaining faith entails the same challenges as regaining trust. Therefore, despite the inevitable national linguistic characteristics among the three contexts, it is reasonable to expect there will not be an unbridgeable chasm in the use and meaning of the terms trust and distrust. Secondly, although in both non-English languages the term distrust can translate as a noun, there is no equivalent translation for the verb that denotes the act of distrusting. However, we believe that this does not pose a challenge to the study of distrusting attitudes, since the focus of this investigation is the study of latent psychological attitudes and not linguistic expressions of distrust.

3.3 Qualitative research: Exploring the meaning of citizens' political distrust

As a social scientific field, political science is inherently interested in meaning. Using an often quoted example in the interpretative tradition by Gilbert Ryle, King et al. (1994) comment on the fundamental difference in the meaning of a *twitch* and a *wink* – despite the identical appearance of the two actions – to highlight the implications our understanding of such meanings have on social interaction. They explain that "[i]f what we interpret as winks were actually involuntary twitches, our attempts to derive causal inferences about eyelid contraction on the basis of a theory of voluntary social interaction would be routinely unsuccessful: we would not be able to generalise and we would know it" (1994: 40). Their point is directly applicable to studies of political behaviour and emphasises the fact that without access to 'meaning' any attempt to derive theories around the observable implications of citizen actions would be stifled. Research interest in citizen attitudes of political distrust stems from its theorised consequences on participation, cooperation, compliance and democratic governance in general. Understanding what political distrust means for citizens and how it functions is a necessary step before investigating observable implications that form the big questions in political behaviour.

In the case of contested social concepts such as ideology, identity, support, and indeed distrust, political science research can benefit from inductive study, which can provide a better understanding of the subjects' worldview and attitudes, necessary for subsequent elucidation of large-scale survey results (Oppenheim, 1992; Oskamp and Schultz, 2005). For these reasons, we have chosen to conduct popular interviews in the three European states mentioned in the previous section (Creswell, 2009). Departing from quantitative analysis of survey data and focusing on citizens' perceptions, experiences and the way in which they make sense of their political lives, this thesis also hopes to make a methodological contribution to the study of political distrust.

Structured or semi-structured interviews are common methodological tools in qualitative research, but were not appropriate for this project, as the interviewer would be imposing on the information gathered through the selection of language, the wording, the type of topics, the timing and ordering of each question (Hollway and Jefferson, 2008). These impositions are not in line with the research objective at this phase of the study, which is to identify the meaning ascribed to political distrust and inductively explore the aspects entailed in distrusting judgments, phrased in citizens' own words and based on examples from their political lives. Discussion or focus groups with a small number of participants could have

been appropriate for these purposes. However, due to the potentially sensitive evaluative nature of distrusting attitudes and the known influences of partisanship, personal interests and group identification in decisions of political trust and distrust, such discussions could lead to arguments or uncomfortable situations. Therefore, we decided that individual popular narrative interviews were the most appropriate and effective methodological choice to gain access to participants' thoughts on political distrust.

Narrative interviews offer a promising methodological choice. As Roland Barthes notes, narrative is a universal competence that is "present in every age, in every place, in every society" (1993: 251). Systematised as a research tool that aims to reconstruct events from the interviewee's perspective, narrative interviews do not simply offer the recounting of events as a list, but comprehensively connect them in time and meaning (Bauer, 1996; Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). Further, narrative interviews are rich in indexical and non-indexical statements, the former being based on personal experiences and the latter reflecting the interviewee's evaluative system, something that is particularly relevant for judgments of political distrust (Bruner, 2000). Narrative accounts can offer important insights into the thought processes involved in political distrust, showing what types of information citizens use, how they evaluate them, the way they interpret events and choose to explain them to a third party (Bryman, 2012). Further, the participant is at the centre of the story and assumes responsibility for presenting her views, experiences and feelings without interference from the researcher. Though these may not always appear coherent, the encouragement and lack of interruptions by the interviewee and the long length of narrative interviews offers participants the space to retrace their thoughts and connect them in a meaningful way. This interviewing method allows citizens to use their own language when expressing distrusting attitudes, to offer personal interpretations of untrustworthy behaviour and account for their significance.

Despite the fact that there does not exist – and according to Barthes, there has never existed – "a people without narrative" (1966: 14) a potential criticism of the narrative method stems from the relation citizens' narratives have to true events and factual reality. This is a valid point that speaks to a wider question within the study of political distrust using a micro-level research perspective: to what extent do citizen perceptions correspond to reality? The preceding chapter briefly summarised the conceptual difference between political untrustworthiness and distrust, and described different strands of scholarly research that have developed studying the qualities of political institutions or the attitudes of citizens in response

to their political system. This research project focuses on citizens and the concept of political distrust. It follows, therefore, that this attitude is formulated on the basis of citizens' *perceptions* of political actors, through their evaluations, preexisting knowledge and possibly influenced by other personal characteristics and predispositions. Whether these perceptions correspond to factual evidence of untrustworthy conduct on behalf of political actors is a significant, but altogether different question, regarding the untrustworthiness of political systems. For the study of citizen political attitudes it is necessary to consider people's view of their political world, how they choose to approach and navigate it. More importantly, we argue that even though citizen perceptions are subjective, they are real; they shape attitudes that can motivate very real behavioural intentions. All the biases in recalling, interpreting and judging political agents are part of the fabric of political distrust. If citizens' perceptions are the best way to access this attitude area, then narrative interviews offer a well-equipped methodological tool for this purpose.

Participant recruitment and interviewing

The remaining part of this section presents the methodological design for the collection and analysis of qualitative data. Large parts of qualitative research often come under criticism for failing to produce a clear account of how the analysis was conducted, or omitting it altogether, making it hard to support the scientific value and reproducibility of research (Lee and Fielding, 1996). In an effort to address these issues from the outset and enhance the transparency of this project, we present below a detailed account of the research design, recruitment of participants, interviewing protocol, and steps for the analysis of data.

Sixteen interviewees were recruited in each country, adding up to 48 narrative interviews. Given the limited number of participants, our goal was to create a diverse and balanced participant group in terms of key demographic characteristics known from earlier research to affect distrust. A detailed list of the entire sample and country groups is available in Appendix C. Overall, participants formed a mixed gender group (50% female), belonging to a variety of age groups (average age 41.8 years) and socioeconomic status (following the ESEC classification). Geography is also an important factor in the distribution of political distrust attitudes in each country and other political characteristics in many communities (Marien and Hooghe, 2011; Cook and Gronke, 2005); therefore, in order to increase the

diversity of our sample, interviewees were recruited from three different geographical areas within each country. In all three countries we aimed to include interviewees from a big city, a smaller city and a rural area. In Italy these were chosen from the north, the centre and south of the country, in England from the capital, the west and the north and in Greece from the capital, the north and the Aegean.[18]

Participants were recruited for this study in two ways. The majority of participants were approached ahead of the interview through referral networks of local people who did not participate in the study, but were asked to nominate other citizens who might be willing to participate. Some participants were invited to participate in an interview selected randomly from social settings, always with the aim of recruiting as diverse a sample as possible in all three national contexts.[19] A written interview invitation was distributed to all participants outlining the nature of the interview process prior to the start of recording. For the purposes of our study it was important to not refer explicitly to the issue of political distrust, as this could predispose participants and introduce acquiescence and response bias in their accounts. After introducing the researcher and the purpose of the study it was also specified that participants did not have to mention their political affiliations or party preference, as the purpose of the study was to better understand how [British/Greek/Italian] citizens think about politics, politicians and institutions in their country. Following this introduction and disclosure of the academic purposes and anonymity of the research findings, participants appeared more confident and eager to share their views, and to even speak about ideological and party preferences. A full copy of the invitation as well as the introduction to each interview can be seen in Appendix D.

Interviews were conducted with the help of a handful of thematic headings to trigger thoughts and ideas on political evaluations and distrust. Each interview commenced with the same

[18] The exact locations where fieldwork took place are the following: Italy: Milan (Northern Italy), Florence area (Central Italy), Puglia area (Southern Italy). England: London (capital city), Hertfordshire (East England) and Norwich (North England). Greece: Athens (capital city), Thessaloniki (Northern Greece), Aegina (Aegean island).

[19] Two thirds of participants were contacted in advance and recruited via this 'second-referral' method, and a third of participants was recruited randomly in social settings (cafés, piazzas, restaurants). While every effort was made to have a diverse and balanced interviewee pool in terms of demographic characteristics, it is possible that people self-select to participate in the study on the basis of their, existing distrusting outlook, their interest in politics or even time-availability. For this reason, the purpose of the study was not mentioned explicitly and 'distrust' was not mentioned in any of the correspondence with participants or introductory information. Also, participants who initially claimed not to have much to say or to be uninterested in politics were specifically encouraged to participate in the study and efforts were made to meet with busier participants in convenient locations (close to their place of work, during a 1hour lunch-break or after work).

prompter asking participants "What are your thoughts about politics in England/Greece/Italy?" According to Jovchelovitch and Bauer's (2000) systemisation of the narrative interview, the researcher managed to pose as an 'outsider' in all three national contexts with limited information about political developments and past events, and had minimal input throughout the interview, using only follow-up and encouraging intercessions. Interviews averaged 58 minutes in length (the shortest interview lasted 41 minutes and the longest 79 minutes), providing approximately 2,770 minutes of interview content. The length of interviews and general approach to the subject of politics varied widely across participants, depending on their willingness and ability to express their views on politics uninterrupted for extended periods of time. A potential limitation of the narrative interview methodology is that certain types of people and cultural contexts are better suited to taking advantage of the unstructured and open nature of the interview. Narrative interviews seemed to work well in all three countries, but we did observe variation in the length and content of narrative accounts among people with different levels of political interest and political knowledge, as well as the eagerness of citizens to share their views between Greek, Southern Italian, Northern Italian and English participants.

Seven-step thematic analysis

Thematic analysis offers a highly robust set of tools for the systematisation and study of qualitative data (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Boyatzis, 1998). It begins with "careful reading and re-reading of the data", in order to identify common themes that can be synthesised in common patterns describing the concept under study (Rice and Ezzy, 1999: 258). The method of analysis chosen for this part of the study follows seven steps after the data collection phase. It arrives at a synthesis and inductive interpretation of the patterns observed in citizen accounts that inform our conceptual model of political distrust. These steps represent an eclectic collection of the most appropriate phases of qualitative analysis for political attitudes, in line with Creswell (2009), Rossman and Rallis (1998), Tesch (1990) and Attride-Stirling (2001).

Table 3.1: Seven steps of qualitative analysis

Step 1	Transcription of narrative interviews
Step 2	First stage of analysis: reading of the data, identifying common themes that emerge from expressions of political distrust
Step 3	Translation of narrative content
Step 4	Second stage of analysis: Summarising the data and streamlining recurrent examples, issues or themes that emerge
Step 5	Third stage of analysis: Categorisation of condensed information on the basis of higher-order themes that encapsulate key aspects of political distrust judgments. These are: observations, expectations, retrospective events/examples, evaluative dimension technical, moral, interest-based, emotional response, behavioural intention response.
Step 6	Fourth stage of analysis: Connecting data, describe, explore and summarise the connections between evaluations, observations and responses and the interactions of themes identified.
Step 7	Final stage of analysis: Interpreting the patterns identified and mapping a conceptual model of political distrust.

All interviews were transcribed in the original language and then translated by the researcher. Content was analysed in a step-wise procedure of text reduction and categorised in line with Bauer (1996) and Schatzman and Strauss (1973). Thematic analysis of narrative content provided manageable amounts of information and allowed for the identification of common observations, patterns and thought processes in expressions of political distrust across different participants and national contexts. Condensed interview material was then categorised according to: general observations, negative expectations, retrospective events or past examples of distrust, technical, moral and interest-based evaluative dimensions, emotional response and behavioural intention responses. We depart from the use of the term ‘codes’ and ‘coders’, preferring to explain the method of analysis as thematic, with a data reduction stage, identification of specific themes in the expressions of political distrust and higher-order themes that capture overarching aspects of distrusting judgment, followed by a categorisation of interview content. Our purpose is to uncover the meaning citizens ascribe to distrusting judgments and to understand how they explain their decision to distrust (to trust or to remain neutral) in an inductive way. For this reason, we are looking to connect and

interpret the various aspects present in citizen narratives of distrust as part of a coherent attitudinal mechanism (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Agar, 1980). We were therefore looking for issues expected to emerge from existing studies of political distrust but also aspects that were surprising, unusual and perhaps not anticipated in the earlier stages of the research (Creswell, 2009).

As an example, the emotive responses that accompanied expressions of distrust were an unexpected aspect which emerged from the narrative accounts, leading the researcher to go back and expand the search in existing literature of social psychology to further investigate this aspect of distrust judgments. The process of deriving a conceptual model for political distrust included such interactions between the analysis of qualitative data and theory. The remaining categories were identified as a result of both a theoretically informed understanding of political distrust judgments and information emerging from the interview data. An extract of analysed interview data is presented in Appendix E. The thematic analysis of narrative interviews, in combination with the presented theoretical framework for the study of political distrust, led to the reconceptualisation of distrust judgments and formed the basis for a new operationalisation and measurement.

3.4 Quantitative research: Operationalisation, measurement and the analysis of survey data

Part of the puzzle in attitudes of political distrust lies in the previously unexplored meaning citizens attach to distrusting evaluations. Another part of it lies in the information we can extract from quantitative evidence and the interpretation we give to survey indicators of political distrust. This thesis attempts to tackle both these puzzles, therefore, after shedding light on citizens' expressions of distrust, we proceed to propose a novel operationalisation and measurement indicator. This indicator of political distrust was included in an online survey for the UK, yielding quantitative evidence that will add to our understanding of distrusting judgements. The remaining sections of this chapter present the methodological choices in the operationalisation and measurement of political distrust, as well as the statistical methods employed in the later parts of the thesis to analyse quantitative data.

Operationalisation

We have conceptualised political distrust as a negative *attitude* held by the citizen towards parts or the entirety of their political system. Social and political psychology posits that attitudes are tri-componential, with a cognitive, affective and action-tendency component (Oppenheim, 2012; Oskamp and Schultz, 2005). Although scientists do not necessarily agree whether these three parts should be seen as separate concepts or not, the focus has been placed mainly on the evaluative (cognitive and affective) dimension of attitudes. Eagly and Chaiken define an attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (1993: 1). Most social scientists agree that political attitudes are social constructs that can be inferred, but not observed directly (Oppenheim, 1992). To proceed with an operationalisation of political distrust it is necessary to understand distrust as such a construct, that is, a latent entity. It is a latent, rather than manifest or observable variable, such as for example a person's age or whether they participated in the last general election, which would be easier to operationalise and of course, measure. Therefore, we collect evidence based on a series of questions, the manifest items, and assume that the presence or absence of a latent variable is the cause behind the score a respondent gives to each item. Since we cannot observe the true level of the latent variable (the strength and magnitude of political distrust), we cannot determine the relationship between the item and the latent variable scores. What we can do, however, is study the relationship among a series of manifest items we believe are caused by the same latent variable to assess the validity of our measure (DeVellis, 2012). Table 3.2 presents each step from the conceptual model of political distrust to its operationalisation and measurement.

Table 3.2: Map for the conceptualisation, operationalization and measurement of political distrust

Attitudes of Political Distrust							
CONCEPTUAL MODEL							
Relational citizen – political actor		Evaluative and dynamic		Retrospective and prospective		Negative	Cyclical
OPERATIONALISATION (Variables)							
Evaluations of National Parliament	Evaluations of a citizen's preferred political party	Technical evaluations	Ethical evaluations	Interest-based evaluations	Assessments of the past	Upcoming expectations	Functions as specific and general attitude (heuristic)
MEASUREMENT (Items and indicator)							
In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions.	In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions.	In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions.		When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the competent decision.	When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the right decision.		When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences.
In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions.	In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions.	In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions.		When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that this party would be likely to take the competent decision.	When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that this party would be likely to take the right decision.		When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that this party would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences.

Qualitative analysis of citizen interviews helped to identify the relational, evaluative and time-dynamic nature of political distrust judgments. The relational nature of political distrust attitudes translates to the need to specify a political agent whose untrustworthiness respondents are asked to evaluate. There are many political players, institutions, groups and political figures that citizens evaluate and decide whether to distrust. Due to space limitations in survey questionnaires and time-duration concerns for the survey, we decided to specify two political objects that emerge as important targets of citizen evaluations from the literature and the narrative interviews. National parliament captures institutional evaluations directed at the central legislative institution of representative democracy. Given that it is comprised of elected officials from all political parties it is a considerably less partisan political actor than the national government, where trust is strongly associated with individual partisan identification and evaluations of the current incumbents. A single measure of trust in national parliament is often used in European empirical research as an indicator of citizens' political trust, since it symbolises the institution and processes of democratic legislation and includes the political class across the party system.

In section 4.4 "The 'political' in political distrust" we found that evaluations of political institutions, such as the National Parliament, incorporate evaluations of the politicians that populate them, as well as institutional processes and outcomes. The analysis of narrative interviews, presented in more detail in the following chapter, indicates that participants interpret national parliament in these ways, at least in the emphasis they place on the evaluation of parliamentarians, of institutional processes or outputs. Further more, given that politicians and the political class tends to receive the lowest trust scores and the most unfavourable evaluations among all other parts of the political system and public service posts (along with political parties), we believe asking respondents about politicians directly would result in overly negative evaluations and bias our measurement (Jennings and Stoker, 2015). It is clear that the national parliament is a highly visible political institution in all three contexts studied and an integral part of the democratic political system that citizens live in. Therefore, it is a political agent citizens are likely to evaluate, where distrusting relations are particularly important for their implication on future citizen attitudes and behaviour. We select the national parliament as both an appropriate and central agent for studying citizen distrust.

The second political target we consider is a citizen's preferred political party. With this operationalisation we depart from the standard practice in European research that asks respondents their level of trust in all political parties, and in US research that focuses on evaluations of all politicians or the government. Our purpose is to allow respondents to select their preferred subcomponent of their political system, in order to provide a stronger test for distrusting attitudes and map its lower boundary. Further, the role political parties play in the way citizens relate to and evaluate their political system has been highlighted by theoretical and empirical research on political distrust, formulating theories regarding the diverging interests and ideological positioning between citizens and parties. Considerations about representation emerge clearly through qualitative empirical evidence. Participants emphasise their democratic expectation of finding a political group whose interests, ideological positions and general outlook of society they share. More importantly, if such a political group does not exist, or if the political group one has chosen behaves in an untrustworthy manner, it influences citizens' overall approach politics. Further, using citizens' preferred political party as a political target to capture and investigate attitudes of political distrust allows us to capture evaluations towards a political object that transcends partisan feelings.

Having identified the evaluative nature of political distrust attitudes we operationalise distrust following three evaluative dimensions. The conceptual model of distrust put forward in this thesis postulates three evaluative dimensions as part of citizens' decision to distrust: evaluations of incompetence on technical matters, evaluations of unethical conduct and evaluations of diverging interests on divisive situations. Manifest variables will touch on the technical, moral and interest-based dimensions of untrustworthiness in order to establish their ontological status and how they relate to each other. The dynamic temporal dimension of political distrust suggests that distrusting attitudes entail a retrospective evaluation of past evidence, as well as a prospective formulation of expectation regarding the conduct of political agents. We therefore specify variables that directly touch on the retrospective assessments and prospective expectations for the behaviour of respondents' political parties and the national parliament along technical, moral and interest-based lines.

Finally, we conceptualised political distrust as cyclical – not only because of the reciprocity it demands and its self-reinforcing nature, but also because it spills over from specific political agents to a general attitude towards the political system, and from a general attitude towards the political system to specific agents being considered as untrustworthy. People can

formulate and hold attitudes towards an abstract issue, as much as they can hold attitudes towards a concrete object from their social environment (Maio et al., 2006). This is particularly true in the case of political distrust. In the preceding chapter it was noted that a substantial part of the confusion surrounding theories of political distrust and empirical findings stems from the dual function of political distrust as a specific evaluation grounded in an assessment of the technical, ethical and interest-based record of a political agent, as well as a general orientation towards the political system as whole. The two functions co-exist and influence each other, making it harder for political researchers to separate them conceptually and, of course, empirically. This project faces the same challenge. Yet having explored in-depth judgments of political distrust and following an operationalisation that includes evaluations of two political agents from different levels of the political system, along various dimensions of assessment, we should be in a more advantageous position to further investigate this dual function through quantitative data.

Measurement

The final part of Table 3.2 shows the items used to measure political distrust in our survey. There are 12 Likert items phrased as attitude statements asking respondents to denote their level of agreement or disagreement. Based on measurement research, attitude statements used to measure latent traits need to remain short, to avoid colloquialisms, double negatives and proverbs, and not be too extreme, so as to allow respondents to make full use of the agreement or disagreement gradation in response options available (Oppenheim, 1992). To capture attitudes of political distrust the manifest items also need to be specific enough to guide respondents' thoughts to an evaluative dimension and time projection for the political target identified, and at the same time generic enough to work across space and time, to allow respondents to recall events and formulate expectations based on their own experiences and perceptions of politics.

It is important to note that there are potentially unlimited ways to construct attitude statements that capture political distrust, even following the said operationalisation. However, we are interested in creating an indicator of political distrust that can potentially travel across national contexts and across time to allow for comparative and longitudinal study. Exploratory qualitative research offered an array of specific examples of political distrust that

could be transformed into attitude statements, yet the contextual-specific nature of these examples would make it difficult to translate to other time periods and societies. Examples such as the expenses scandal or the inquiry into the Iraq war may be very impactful for current evaluations of political agents in the UK, but not outside the UK and potentially neither for British citizens in the years to come. Furthermore, such specific examples leave unspecified the political agent that potential untrustworthy conduct will be attributed to, which as will be shown, varies between citizens. Therefore, the manifest items were phrased in a way to tap into particular evaluative contexts of technical ability, ethical behaviour and ideologically divisive decisions, and address specific political agents that we consider important in overall attitudes of political distrust. We decided to phrase all items in positive language to avoid awkwardly phrased statements that may overestimating negative evaluations towards the two political objects due to acquiescence bias. [1] Although a mixture of positively and negatively phrased items are often used for attitude measurement, our items are expected to tap on into different evaluative dimensions which we want to explore further, which would be difficult if we introduced such variation in the phrasing. The items are still designed to tap on political distrust as negative low responses would tap on unfavourable evaluations of political targets along the lines that were identified in the qualitative part of the research.

Each item measures respondents' agreement or disagreement to the attitude statement presented in Table 3.2 using a seven-point scale. The use of seven-point scales for attitude measurement offers an appropriate number of response categories, wide enough to gather ample information on the strength and distribution of respondent attitudes, yet concise enough to avoid a central tendency bias (Miller, 1956; Uslaner, 2013; Alwin and Krosnick, 1991; Schwartz, 2003; Petrzelka et al., 2013). The items can be added in a simple arithmetical average to create an overall scale of political distrust. Scale creation will be discussed in more detail in the following sections and will be the object of analysis in Chapter 5. But before moving on, it is important to note the choice of measurement level for political distrust. Political attitudes are habitually measured in survey research via multi-item indicators added up in a Likert scale. Although these items record answers in scales from four

[1] The positively phrased items we are making it harder for respondents to register distrusting attitudes overall. Acquiescence bias refers to the tendency of respondents to agree with the statement provided, no matter its phrasing, hence negative statements about political institutions would tend to record higher political distrust. Similarly, the specific phrasing of the statements help differentiate between political that is 'right' in a technical, ethical or selfish way, something that is missing from current survey instruments causing difficulty in interpreting citizen evaluations towards government and politics.

up to ten 'agree-disagree' response categories, it is common practice to treat attitude scales as continuous variables (Jamieson, 2004; Norman, 2010). The investigation of attitudes of political distrust faces the same problem. Political distrust is a continuum, since one can distrust a political agent to varying degrees, but at the same time it is substantively separate from neutral and positive evaluations of trustworthiness. In our analysis we follow the scaling methodology research and treat the variable of political distrust as a continuous indicator, but at the same time investigate different structures that arise from the aforementioned differences.

For a classical linear scale model, scaling methodology emphasises the following four requirements: linearity and unidimensionality, adequate reliability, adequate validity and reproducibility (Oskamp and Schultz, 2005; DeVellis, 2012; Oppenheim, 1970). We use the items presented above to construct a scale for political distrust according to our conceptual model, but since this is an exploratory project we will also investigate the associations between each item and whether they can be considered as parallel instruments through the survey data. We explore the internal structure of the data to examine dimensionality, linearity and other attributes of the new indicator of political distrust, especially the association between the evaluative dimensions and the association between distrust in different political targets. Statistical analysis in this part of the thesis adds new evidence to the conceptual model of political distrust we have formulated and contributes to our understanding of the operation of distrust measurement.

The new items were included in an online survey conducted by a research institute which specialises in online survey research and maintains a panel of UK respondents.[2] The total sample was 785 respondents, representing a varied sample of the UK population, with an average age of 47.6 years and 50.4% women. Online samples have yet to reach the representativeness and breadth of national surveys, but they offer far better opportunities to study political attitudes than university student samples, which differ from the general

[2] The study originally included an experimental part that falls outside the scope of the thesis. The retrospective and prospective survey items were placed in different parts of the questionnaire to avoid identical evaluations. The latter were placed in the second part of the questionnaire following an unrelated stimulus of newspaper content, but were not affected by the manipulation. More information on the survet as well as the analysis of responses based on different combinations of experimental groups are available in Appendix F.

population in many more respects, especially age, education and geographical location (Robinson et al., 1991; Sears, 1986).[3]

We carried out a series of multivariate statistical analyses using survey data on the 12 new items to explore the underlying structures and answer the key questions regarding the internal structure of distrusting attitudes guiding this part of the research. First, we looked at the descriptive statistics of the items data and analysed the similarities and differences between the manifest items. Quantitative data can help us expand the conceptual model by determining the associations between the evaluative dimensions, time projections and political targets and by examining the validity and reliability of the new indicator through statistical analysis.

The primary concern for scale measurement theory is dimensionality: whether the items used to measure a latent trait do indeed measure the same and single construct. Reliability analysis uses an internal consistency method to determine whether all the items measure the same underlying continuum. The motivation behind latent trait measurement is that since we cannot observe and directly measure the attitude of interest, in this case political distrust, we use items that tap into this latent attitude. If all items tap into political distrust they are not only highly associated with distrust, but also with each other. Reliability analysis uses this rationale to calculate the strength of associations between all items and indicate whether they form a reliable scale of political distrust attitudes (DeVellis, 2012). Chronbach's alpha coefficient is used as an internal consistency and scalability estimate (Chronbach, 1951; Nunnally, 1978).

Reliability analysis using Chronbach's alpha coefficient has been criticised as a test for scale uni-dimensionality (Green et al., 1977). A stronger statistical test to investigate the dimensional validity of the underlying scale is the use of exploratory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) uses the same rationale of latent attitude measurement and allows items to load on as many underlying factors as there are in the data. It is the most widely used analysis technique to explore whether attitude complexes are homogenous or

[3] A breakdown of demographic characteristics of the sample is presented in Appendix G and a copy of the entire survey questionnaire is attached as Appendix J. In terms of demographic characteristics, levels of education are theoretically and empirically related to attitudes of political distrust (winners hypothesis) and the lack of a representativeness in terms of educational level in our sample could explain why we routinely find no association between our measure of distrust and respondents' education. Nevertheless, a slightly higher level of education in our respondents compared to the population would only tend to underestimate distrusting attitudes.

entail different independent dimensions. EFA is a useful tool to investigate the dimensionality of distrusting attitudes based on different retrospective and prospective evaluations and to determine whether distrust towards different parts of the political system are different or form part of a homogenous attitude, merely tapping into different parts of the same latent concept of political distrust. In such cases the two dimensions would belong to the same rather than to two different indicators of distrust towards specific political agents (DeVellis, 2012). Useful criteria, such as the amount of information captured by each underlying factor in the data (Eigenvalue), can help determine the number of factors worth considering in a meaningful conceptualisation (Kaiser, 1960). Information on item factor loadings and communality can also help us identify which items are performing better and which poorer at capturing the latent factor (DeVellis, 2012; Bartholomew et al., 2008; Bartholomew et al., 2011). Furthermore, for our purposes of exploring the dimensionality of political distrust, factor analysis allows the calculation and graphical representation of a two-factor model and the rotation of factors in two-dimensional space, which aids in the interpretation of underlying dimensions.

We also use Mokken scale analysis on the basis of consistent differences among the manifest items, as an additional investigation into the dimensional validity of the political distrust scale, and to investigate whether hierarchies exist within our data. Likert scales and classical test theory (factor analysis and reliability analysis) assume that all items are parallel instruments of the latent construct, yet a hierarchical data structure means certain items differ in their distributions. A Mokken scale conforms with all the fundamental assumptions of Item Response theory[4] (unidimensionality, monotonicity, and local independence), and offers the opportunity to identify hierarchies within the data, meaning that it takes into account that certain items are easier to agree with than others. Mokken analysis allows us to investigate this (in a more flexible manner than the Rasch scale) and to determine whether the scale follows a Monotone Homogeneity model, where the order of item 'easiness' differs among respondents, or a Double Monotonicity model, where items are ordered in the same manner by all respondents. In the conceptual model of political distrust proposed in this thesis, we have identified three evaluative dimensions and two time projections embedded in distrust judgments, which can be targeted towards parts of the political system or a specific political actor. Using Mokken scale analysis we can not only verify the status of the different

[4] For more information on Item Response Theory see Sijtsma and Molenaar (2002) and on the development and applications of Mokken Scale analysis see Mokken (1971, 1997) and Van der Ark (2007).

evaluative dimensions as parts of distrusting attitudes, but also determine whether there is a hierarchy along different dimensions or a hierarchy in distrusting the national parliament and one's preferred political party.

We supplement the analysis of the new items of political distrust using a respondent-centred approach. Latent class analysis (LCA) is a statistical method that identifies substantively meaningful groups of people based on their response patterns to the measured items. It investigates the latent structures not based on the items, like factor analysis, but based on the way in which respondents decide to combine their answers to all the items in distinct patterns. Furthermore, LCA pays attention to the categorical nature of the measurement items. It calculates the probability of selecting particular response categories for each identified group, allowing us to see how respondents approach the different items and which responses are paired. This statistical analysis provides an additional test for the dimensions identified through factor analysis, but more importantly, highlights groups of respondents based on their overall evaluations through the manifest items. These groups supplement our understanding of citizens' political distrust and give rise to subsequent validity exercises.

Attitude research requires a measurement scale to be not only reliable, linear and uni-dimensional, but also a valid measure of the underlying attitudinal construct. In fact, none of the above exercises would be very informative if the latent attitude being measured was something other than political distrust. Apart from face validity that is argued conceptually, we also investigate construct validity. Since latent attitudes are unobservable, construct validity can be determined through establishing a network of relationships between the new indicator and other variables of interest or a well-validated measure of distrust administered in the survey (concurrent validity). Theoretical assumptions of associations between political distrust and other variables and characteristics of respondents, stemming from theoretical work and previous research, can serve as a test for the validity of the new indicator of political distrust. If the new measure behaves in a way that is expected given these assumptions, this provides good evidence to support construct validity.

Of course, the association of political distrust with other variables, especially other political attitudes and behaviour, is what renders distrust such an important and interesting attitude area. In Chapter 6, we examine associations between the new distrust indicator, as well as the distrust in parliament and preferred party indices, with other external variables of interest,

such as political knowledge, efficacy, political cynicism and behavioural intentions in the political arena. Our aim is to explore whether different citizen characteristics are associated more strongly or in a different direction with the various subcomponents of distrusting attitudes. We take advantage of the multi-item indicator of political distrust and examine associations per political target, time projection and evaluative dimension, both through bivariate correlations and partial associations. Of particular interest is the effect of political distrust upon political behaviour. In the context of this thesis, it is important to note two points. Firstly, although we have very good theoretical and empirical reasons to argue for the effect of political distrust upon behaviour, we are not in a position to employ methods for causal inference to determine direct causal effects. We are only investigating the association between our measure of distrust, its subcomponents, and survey questions inquiring about respondents' behaviour. Secondly, the survey measures focus on respondents' behavioural intentions, not realised actions. In this sense, we do not claim to provide evidence as to the particular behavioural consequences of distrust, but examine the association between different evaluative dimensions of distrusting attitudes and the likelihood respondents would consider various types of political behaviour.

The types of political behaviour we enquire after are also informed by our exploratory research and theoretical expectations, as mentioned in the preceding chapter. We are particularly interested in aspects of electoral behaviour that are damaging for democratic politics, such as electoral abstention, blank voting and support for a radical or extreme political party. These types of political action are grouped together with two extreme behavioural intentions, attending a violent demonstration and leaving the country, following exploratory factor analysis. Together these five behavioural intention items form an index representing disruptive types of political participation. The second index we consider refers to measures of active political participation that includes attending a peaceful demonstration, joining a political party and joining a pressure group or NGO. The final part of the quantitative analysis employs all the insights gathered through previous analyses to investigate these associations and provide suggestions for further study in the area of political distrust. Again we look at measures of bivariate associations as well as partial associations, controlling for key demographics and political ideology. The measure of political ideology on a left-right spectrum is important to control for when considering political participation and electoral behaviour, as ideology has an independent influence on citizen behaviour in the political arena.

The conceptualisation and operationalisation of political distrust culminated in a novel measurement tool, which uses multiple items to tap into different evaluative aspects of distrust and different political targets. In the creation of this indicator we follow best-measurement practices to avoid measurement error and create a valid and reliable index. This allows us to investigate the internal structure of the distrust attitude area, but also to disaggregate the overall scales and examine associations between external variables of interest and individual items, evaluative dimensions or political targets. The statistical analysis employed throughout the quantitative empirical chapters of the thesis suggests that evaluations of distrust of national parliament and distrust of one's preferred party can be used as two separate indicators for attitudes towards these two political targets, as well as combined in a single indicator of overall political distrust.

3.5 Summary of methodologies and conclusion

The holistic nature of this research project demands a mixed methodological approach to the study of political distrust. To address the question of meaning and the way in which citizens express attitudes of political distrust, we conducted popular narrative interviews with citizens in three European democracies. Narrative interviews from Greece, Italy and the UK were thematically analysed to construct a conceptual model of political distrust. Gathering qualitative evidence from three European democracies helps to boost the validity and generalisability of our findings. The aim has been to explore distrust as a psychological attitude area and not solely in the three national contexts where data was gathered. The exercise of peeling off multiple layers of context-specific information and events to determine common threads, evaluations and meanings attached to political distrust expressions across all respondents has given rise to a conceptual model, which could be applied outside the three contexts studied as part of this thesis.

There are a number of potential caveats in the research design employed, apart from the limited cases informing the qualitative part of this research project. The first has to do with the subjectivity of the researcher, which may pose the risk of unintentionally shaping or interpreting interview evidence in light of pre-existing biases or theoretical positions. To help

counter this risk, the researcher must exercise self-discipline, not interfere with the interview process or begin the analysis before all evidence is collected, and proceed with an analysis that considers negative and discrepant information that may run against some of the themes and patterns identified. This is especially true for an exploratory research design that aims at identifying meaning and unifying patterns. Actively considering evidence that does not fall within the framework established, such as the varying level of importance placed upon the different evaluative dimensions by different individuals in their decision to distrust, or the fact that for some participants political distrust does not make sense as a term to explain attitudes towards politics, strengthens the analysis and interpretation of findings by highlighting the inevitable complexities inherent in political attitudes. Finally, the logic of triangulation with different sources of data and existing literature provides a further sources of validation.

Secondly, one question regarding the study of political distrust attitudes rarely addressed in empirical research concerns researchers' ability to reach out to citizens who have serious reasons to be distrustful, such as the unemployed, systematically disadvantaged and those living at risk of poverty. This is a potential problem of qualitative as much as quantitative research, which can be improved by more inclusive sampling and targeted groups. In this particular study, we attempted to include as diverse a sample as possible in the interview stage, including socioeconomic background and employment history, but were not able to reach out to people without a method of communication such as a landline or access to email. Even within the participant group, despite the fact that the narrative interview worked well as a methodological tool across all three national contexts, there were still observable differences in the duration, coherence and depth of narratives along the lines of education and political interest. Nevertheless, these narratives were very informative and an integral part of the analysis, as they gave a more direct line to citizens' thought processes and attitudes than more elaborate and eloquent narratives that tended to shift the focus of the interview away from personal evaluations and towards an attempt to provide objective observations of political reality.

Finally, the research steps followed for the operationalisation and measurement of distrusting attitudes included multiple decisions regarding the evaluative dimensions, political targets and phrasing of survey items. Given the sequential research design employed, the justification for some of these choices will become clearer in the following chapter, which

presents the analysis and findings from the interview stage of the project. In the present chapter, we have presented the overall methodological framework followed in order to address the motivating research question, “What is political distrust?”, to present a conceptual model of distrusting attitudes that reveals the meaning and evaluative processes entailed in the decision to distrust, and to provide further evidence on the internal structure of such attitudes based on the aforementioned model.

Chapter 4: What Do Citizens Mean and Think When Claiming to Distrust Political Institutions and Politicians?

So, how do citizens think about political distrust? In this chapter we provide an answer to this question by exploring the meaning attitudes of political distrust take for the citizens that express them. Throughout this thesis it has been argued that distrust is relational and evaluative, meaning it is an attitude held by a citizen in relation to specific political agents or the entire political system, based on individual perceptions. These perceptions concern technical failures, the unfairness of intentions and outcomes, as well as the level of divergent or congruent interests between the citizen and politics. We have also argued that distrusting attitudes are dynamic and can change depending on the perceived trustworthiness of the agent being evaluated, but that they are also comprehensive orientations that can act as a heuristic mechanism for future attitudes and even behavioural intentions. This is particularly true for behaviour that has to do with citizens' own intentions of fulfilling the role of good citizens, which results in this vicious circle of distrust in politics. These are some of the conceptual characteristics we have attributed to political distrust in this thesis and they have been primarily derived through the analysis of narrative interviews of Italian, English and Greek citizens. All the relevant information regarding fieldwork research, the participants and the methods of analysis of narrative content are available in the preceding chapter. In this chapter, our aim is to present the findings of our thematic analysis and address two fundamental questions: 'What do citizens mean when expressing political distrust?' and 'Does this meaning remain constant among different citizens, contexts and political agents being evaluated?' We therefore discuss the key themes that emerge from citizens' narratives and the evaluations underlying judgments of distrust. We further consider how such judgments vary when evaluating different political agents.

The discussion is supplemented by interview extracts, which are used to demonstrate the type of discourse citizens employ, the specific events and information they recount and the underlying judgments entailed in distrusting attitudes. The purpose of the quotes is both

illustrative and representative, although the latter term needs to be used with caution in small N qualitative research, and especially this kind of exploratory study, which seeks to investigate relations between evaluations and expressions of distrust rather than generalising findings. The extracts are representative in so far as they indicate expressions and capture evaluations that were articulated in a similar manner by participants other than the person being quoted. Once a number of narratives was analysed, it became clear that certain themes and judgments were recurring across different participants and contexts, increasing our confidence in this part of the research. From its outset, this analytical exercise did not begin with rigid notions about the nature of political distrust nor set expectations about the type of behaviours or reactions of distrusting citizens. The advantage of the study's research design is that during the analysis of interview data it was possible to identify less visible and unanticipated aspects of political distrust, such as the particular emotional manifestations and psychological state associated with expressions of extreme distrust in the system, as well as differences between distrust addressed towards specific political actors or differences in the evaluative dimensions each individual may prioritise. These aspects of distrusting attitudes contribute to scholarly understanding of political distrust and highlight many of the complexities entailed in this field of study that could be addressed in further research.

4.1 Narratives of political distrust

We begin the analysis of popular interviews by highlighting common themes emerging in narratives of political distrust and presenting how distrust is expressed through the citizens' own wording. This thematic analysis is a first step in tracing common patterns of expression, before being able to move a step away from the specific events, processes and individual political actors that citizens refer to in their accounts and towards the cognitive and affective evaluative processes distrusting attitudes entail. The analysis of interview content identified common themes running through interview transcripts from all three national contexts and participant backgrounds. Undoubtedly, there is variation in the way different citizens perceive and evaluate politics, and to that end this chapter also presents empirical evidence that shows alternative orientations and understandings of political distrust. Nevertheless, the prevailing similarities that emerge regarding the nature and underlying evaluations of distrust lead us to analyse evidence from the three national contexts together and provide insights into

the general meaning and attribution of political distrust in general, rather than in each specific cultural context. Interview extracts from multiple narratives are used throughout this chapter to highlight these common threads and present citizens' perceptions and expressions of distrust.

Firstly, we find that the electoral process is central in almost every citizen narrative and the act of voting comes up as the first point of reference in citizens' relation to the political world, even when negatively oriented. This is not surprising, as many participants from all three European democracies seem to consider elections and the right to vote as a central feature of their democratic system and an integral part of their civic identity. Elections represent the opportunity for each citizen to voice their political will, to participate in the democracy they live in and to articulate their preferences in a meaningful way. Even for participants that did not explicitly ascribe any particular value to elections, the act of supporting a political party was used as an example of faith and of extended trust in that party and the political system. Political distrust emerges in the context of elections at the institutional level, when the electoral process is viewed as not functioning properly or failing to give citizens a chance to make their voices heard. This could be because of a perceived faulty electoral system, such as the closed-list system in Italy, which according to some participants is "a scandal" (I-3105) and "un-democratic" (I-1206). A participant from Italy explains this in a simple way:

> So, I can vote for the party of, say 'San Pellegrino',[5] and then Mr. San Pellegrino can send us a Mafioso into Parliament…Choosing who goes into Parliament is a huge power. But they [politicians] do not care about anything, they are completely disconnected. (I-2112)

Citizens perceive the electoral process as a con, since it allows the party leadership to choose the names of candidate representatives and the order in which they appear on the ballot paper, taking away their right to decide their representatives and often promoting undeserving cronies and individuals who are perceived as serving 'special' interests. Distrust of the electoral system was also evident in narratives from the UK, where the first-past-the-post system made some participants describe voting as a waste of time, especially in the case of

[5] 'San Pellegrino' is a brand of bottled water available in Italy. One such bottle was on our table at the time of the interview, leading the participant to use the name as a hypothetical political party name.

people living in a safe constituency, in which the seat is held by their opposing party. This becomes problematic, not only for voters who feel cheated out of their right to express electoral support for their party, but also for participants without any strong partisan preference who believe elections no longer give them the opportunity to "throw the rascals out". A respondent trying to explain her exasperation with the elected MP and councillors in her constituency said:

> We are in a very right-wing local area and the joke is that you could put a turkey up for election with a blue ribbon around its neck, and it would be voted in. So this area has been Tory[6] for a long, long time and like any area that doesn't have that swing in politics, politicians get very complacent. They feel they can do things exactly their way and not worry about their posts, because they know they will be voted in next time. (UK-3213)

It is somewhat surprising that citizens refer to the electoral system in terms of distrust. Earlier conceptual work had raised concerns about the use of the notion in relations between citizens and inanimate objects. However, people appear to recognise the outcome of these processes and to ascribe evaluative judgments. Political processes are a fundamental way in which citizens interact with their political systems, and some participants also tend to highlight that much is designed, implemented, maintained or reversed by legislators with particular power agendas in mind.

Another aspect of the electoral process prominently associated with feelings of political distrust has to do with the parties competing for government and the citizens' electoral support. Unlike the rules of the election process, which are different across the three national contexts, this sentiment was echoed in narratives across all participant groups: the inability to find a political party to support. Many respondents perceived all political parties to be the same, and the division between the left and right to be non-existent, not only in ideological terms, but in terms of following the same policies and serving the same big interests. A participant from Italy connects the two in the following way:

> But they [politicians] are much more likely to look after their own interests; this is what is happening in Italy right now. And this results in not being able to distinguish anymore between the political right and the political left. There is only a group of people, who are politicians and think more about serving

[6] Tory is a commonly used name to refer to the Conservative Party. The colour of the Conservative Party is blue, hence the participant referred to a 'blue ribbon' to suggest the affiliation with that party.

> their own interests, having the right privileges, and who think less and less about the good of citizens, which is in reality what politics should be about. (I-1109)

Being able to cast your vote and show electoral support towards a political party is an act that indicates a certain level of faith in the political process and is perceived by most citizens as a validation and sign of support for the political system. It makes citizens part of the political process itself and allows them to formulate and express a political identity. On the contrary, being unable to lend support to a political group conveys distrust and frustration towards the entire system for not allowing your voice to be heard. This sentiment was particularly prominent among younger participants who felt let down by the political system and the 'old' parties. This distrust is expressed alongside phrases such as respondents "not wanting to vote", "not finding anyone you would give your support to", resentment for having to vote for "the lesser of all evils" or even declaring a refusal to participate and removing themselves completely from the process of electoral choice. Asked to elaborate on an initial comment of politicians being untrustworthy, a Greek participant explained:

> It means that… you cannot trust anyone! The simplest example: we will have elections next year and I do not know who to vote for. And the same last time. This is very bad. That is, I 'm a person who thinks voting is the ultimate right, and I do not like abstaining at all. (G-1205)

Abstaining from the electoral process is the obvious choice for respondents who share this sentiment, though not before they have exhausted all possible political players participating in the political arena, including smaller parties or even radical and non-systemic political parties (if their personal values allow it). In the multi-party contexts under study,[7] support for radical or extreme parties appears to be tied to attitudes of distrust. Investigating further what drives certain citizens to abstain and what drives others to vote for anti-systemic parties would certainly require more complex explanations, of which political distrust is only a part. Nevertheless, the narratives of those individuals demonstrate that the feeling that their tie to electoral representation has broken down is particularly distressing for people who hold strong democratic values and believe in the right and duty of citizens to vote. This in turn

[7] For a more comprehensive discussion on whether the UK can be classified as a multiparty system see Kavanagh and Cowley (2010). Given the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government after the 2010 election and SNP's considerable presence in Westminster following the 2015 general election and the presence of five political parties in Westminster, we believe it is no longer accurate to refer to the UK as a strict two-party system.

increases their distrust in the political system, which is perceived as a system that 'steals' or 'takes away' their rights as citizens to make a choice, punish unworthy politicians and exercise their right to a political identity and civic participation.

The failure of representation comes up repeatedly in narratives of distrust. This holds both at the symbolic level, such as a particular type of political class of 'privately educated, Oxbridge-graduate men' in the UK that are disconnected from the lives and problems of the participants, and in concrete terms of not being able to find any political group or individual that citizens believe will fight to promote their values and well-being. At the partisan level, political parties or political figures could help to provide this link between the citizen and politics. Yet when they fail, the result is unsettling, as this participant states: "There is no one to represent you. So, neither on a lower nor on a higher level can I find anything. That's why I am telling you they take away your will." (G-1203) The perception of political agents as promoting citizens' best-interest and protecting their rights is considered equally important in the case of political parties, as in the case of the institutions that legislate and enforce the rules. Otherwise the citizen-state bond is severed. When probed to elaborate what she means when she claims she is not represented, a young Italian explains:

> When I say "you represent me" it means that I give you my idea, it is as if I make this gift of trust in you and you ought to go, with my name and my face and represent *me* and fight for *my* interest and not yours. When I say, "I feel represented" for example from the institutions or by the political class, is when I know that my rights will be protected in some way. In reality, they don't protect them, they don't protect them through laws and they don't protect them through the justice system... I mean, according to my view there is just general distrust in institutions in Italy. (I-3201)

Many participants also refer to political promises and the perceived accord or disaccord between politicians' words and actions, explaining their distrust in political figures. This mismatch is often cited in relation to the electoral process and manifesto promises, but is also expressed in broader discussions of manipulation and betrayal. Politicians, political parties and governments are held accountable for their promises, their manifesto pledges, electoral campaign commitments and subsequent courses of action. In the UK interviews, for example, the Liberal Democrats' consent to the increase of student tuition fees was often presented as an example of trust betrayal. In interviews from Greece and Italy, where manifesto pledges or coalition programs are less concrete and political promises follow more populist models, the

gap between pre-election promises and subsequent political action is perceived to be exceptionally wide. Hence, political distrust is often expressed as the inability, or unwillingness, to believe what politicians say and is explained using evidence of such dishonesty. It denotes the belief that political promises are empty words employed to deceive voters, and an expectation that political actions will be in the opposite direction.

This perceived discord between promises and actions or between words and facts often prompts a reaction of feeling 'deceived', 'manipulated', 'lied to' or 'intentionally tricked'. Participants consistently chose this language to express their distrust of politics and specific politicians. For example, a participant from Greece asserted that: "I believe that they lie to our faces. You hear a politician, not just any politician, the Prime Minister who is the highest political authority in the country, and he is really lying to you. He says things that at the same time are proven to be untrue." (G-1204) In the UK interviews, people expressed similar sentiments of 'politicians lying to our faces', particularly in regards to war. The Iraq war was mentioned in 12 of the 16 narratives, despite not being a recent event. It was mentioned as a particular instance where citizens felt deceived by their party (in the case of Labour supporters) or by the whole political system and began to feel distrust. In some cases this distrust was extended to the wider political system, while for others it was attributed solely to the Labour party and contained in those politicians involved in the decision-making process at the time. A British participant in his early 30s expressed the former view:

> When we see people lying, point blank in our faces, because they are trying to force on board their political agenda, it makes it very difficult to take politics seriously. If I think about the war in Iraq that happened in my student years […] I remember thinking that they were lying at the time and it just reinforced, in a key time in my life why I didn't believe or trust anything politicians would say anymore. And I think that caused a lot of damage to a whole generation. (UK-1105)

In general, citizen evaluations of politicians emphasise the keeping of promises and performing their job, with particular attention to the specifications of their role and their motives. The abuse of power and political conduct that does not adhere to the requirements of their role feature extensively as examples of untrustworthiness, whether in the form of the expenses scandal in the UK, the manipulation of the legal system in Italy or corruption and clientelistic practices in Greece. In some of the interview extracts presented above, participants have expressed distrusting judgments on occasions where politicians are believed

to have served their own personal interests or other special interests, which are considered to be in stark contradiction to the priorities of the citizen and even the common good of the country. Expressions of distrust phrased in terms of 'preferential treatment' for politicians, 'double standards' in the application of the law and unpunished behaviour are found in many citizen accounts. The concept of responsibility and the need for every political actor to face the consequences of their actions carry strong ethical connotations. Citizens expect that instances of corruption, revelations of scandals, money appropriation or any other unlawful behaviour should give rise to the same – if not more severe – consequences for politicians than for any other normal citizen. When this expectation is not met, citizen distrust can spill-over to the institutional players and to the system in place for its failure to impose punishment.

In this sense, some of the interviewees in the UK perceived the revelation of the MPs expense scandal as an example of inappropriate individuals who were nevertheless caught, rightly punished and removed from positions of authority. A participant from the UK explains his interpretation of the events in the following manner:

> If they [politicians] had actually done something wrong, something that was inherently wrong, then I would want them to be penalised in some way. I would *expect* that to happen. The expenses scandal…well, it's just further blackening their name and people seeing them more as careerists and out for themselves. Overall it is not a positive thing, because you have less trust and faith in them, but it's all turns and tides…Maybe it will mean that the next set that are voted in will come from a different angle and will want to fight against behaviour like that. (UK-1207)

Of course, not all British citizens shared this point of view; not even every British participant in this study showed this level of faith for future political classes. But this interview extract demonstrates the thought process and rationalisation of a specific event in the mind of this participant. In his eyes, the institutional mechanism proved to function according to his normative expectation, and distrust was limited to those individuals who behaved in an untrustworthy manner. The behaviour of specific individuals has affected the trustworthiness of the political class, but individual MPs can be replaced with more trustworthy political representatives. Other narratives of inappropriate political conduct also show that the very absence of well-functioning mechanisms of control and punishment increase the expectation of further abuse of power by people in positions of authority. Citizens are unable to

distinguish between politicians who engage in harmful practices, further fuelling the generalised belief of a whole system that operates in an incompetent, unethical and ineffective manner. For these participants, political distrust spills-over to the institutions, which fail to fulfil their role requirements and reflects distrust at the systemic level.

Further, political distrust towards institutions and the general political system evoke even stronger expectations of distrust for the future, as citizens realise that replacing inappropriate individual politicians will not make a difference to how the system operates. The question of distrust spill-overs is a complex, yet conceptually and practically important aspect of political distrust which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. In effect, all interview transcripts show that participants are sensitive to the interaction between politicians and political processes. An interviewee from Italy notes this in an attempt to structure his thoughts on what might constitute a positive political change:

> In my opinion, what should change in the political system are the representatives, the politicians themselves. But in reality the political system is totally corrupt […] It is so corrupt that we could never have a Saint or even someone serious to govern with integrity. It will always be substantively corrupt and it will always arrange for someone substantively corrupt to govern. (I-1109)

This approach also goes against arguments that claim citizens cannot evaluate the capacities and intentions of systems or institutions due to the fact that they are not natural persons. Although this participant's claims reflect high levels of cynicism, they also suggest that his evaluations may alter when new representatives who want to improve the system are put into place. Most respondents evaluate representative and non-representative political institutions, such as the national parliament or the civil service, by looking to the trustworthy or untrustworthy behaviour of the people that comprise these institutions. At a second level, political institutions are also perceived as entities with operations, rules and functions and designated outputs, as in the case of electoral processes. Citizens often refer to these rules and functions in order to explain their negative assessments of political institutions. Expressions of institutional distrust differ from distrust in politicians and political groups only in part, simply because they have this added layer of complexity; they reflect judgements about the majority of people that act in that institutional space (although not all of them), and they also reflect an evaluation of an institution's operational procedures and outcomes. For example, in the earlier extracts where participants expressed distrust of the electoral system, this was

based on a perception that, in practice, that system was not fulfilling its role in making their voice heard and giving them the right to instigate change.

Since political institutions do not make promises in the same way as a politician or political groups, institutional promises are the equivalent of a mandate, and therefore expressions of distrust focus on the procedures, rules and regulations the institution is meant to sustain. Perceptions of clientelism, inertia, corruption or any other practice that goes against the rules and role of an institution are assessed as failures and form the basis of negative evaluations. Many participants expressed distrust in terms of institutions 'not functioning', operating in a way that harms their best interest or the best interest of the country and a political system that does not respect them as citizens. Furthermore, such expressions of distrust evoke a breakdown in the reciprocal relationship and replace it with expectations of untrustworthy interaction, wish for disassociation and a hostile attitude.

Voting, representation, manipulation, control, promise-breaking, rule-breaking and institutional failure are prominent themes emerging in expressions of political distrust, but this is by no means an exhaustive list. There is much more information in the material gathered, which is already bound to be limited due to the sample size and restricted national contexts studied. However, identifying common underlying themes offers interesting insights into the way citizens in these three European democracies – and potentially beyond – express political distrust. Further, it links this study with previous lines of inquiry into distrusting political attitudes and sets the ground for a deeper investigation into the meaning citizens assign to political distrust and the cognitive processes entailed in evaluations of untrustworthiness.

4.2 The meaning of political distrust

This chapter stresses the meaning citizens assign to expressions of distrust: whether it changes among different individuals and different parts of the political system. The implicit argument is that understanding what citizens mean when they claim to distrust their political system is integral to the study of distrusting attitudes and necessary for interpreting their implications for political behaviour. Our analysis suggests that the meaning political distrust assumes in citizens' narratives is consistently tied to negative outcomes. A citizen's

expression of distrust encapsulates expectations of political conduct that will be proven harmful to them and assessments of political conduct that has impacted them heavily. Therefore, distrust appears to be a dynamic evaluation with an inherent time dimension that is projected both in the past and into the future, denoting negative expectations. An interviewee in Italy thinking about the country's politicians claims: "So, then we say 'they will never look out for my own good, in fact, they will even ruin my life!'" (I-2112) The perceived untrustworthiness of political agents means that citizens are on the lookout and will attempt to protect themselves from harmful outcomes. Interviewees claiming that they "expect nothing good from them [politicians]" (G-2109), stressing that they "simply do not trust institutions" (I-3201) or that they "do not trust the voting system" (UK-3213) anticipate the actions of a political agent to be damaging or misleading in some way.

Whereas trust in politicians or institutions is equated with an expectation of political conduct that falls within the scope of what a 'good politician' or 'successful institution' is, distrust reflects the belief that political agents have failed to uphold their roles. Furthermore, in contrast to the lack of political trust, distrust entails a break in the association between citizens and their political representatives or institution. This meaning of negative impact and the intention to sever the relationship between the citizen and political agents deemed to be untrustworthy in an attempt to protect themselves, is a first point where we distinguish distrust from the lack of trust empirically.

An additional aspect of distrusting attitudes we note is that citizens evaluate evidence of past behaviour and use that to project a judgment into the future in the form of expectations. This dynamic element of time projection emerges from citizen narratives. Retrospective evaluations of previous events and behaviour of political agents and assessments of the likelihood for future untrustworthy behaviour are both integral parts of the decision to mistrust. Another interviewee from the UK, reflecting on the war in Iraq and political manipulation, explains how this experience caused her to lose faith in her political party and how it is shaping future thoughts of supporting that party:

> I think the war was probably the biggest issue. […] You always think, "Why are we doing this? What are we getting out of this? What is there to gain? Why are our politicians lying to us, telling us it is worthwhile?" I think that it was war probably, for me personally, why I lost trust in my party. If I were to vote

> Labour again…But, no, now I can't. I have lost trust in my party because of that. (UK-1204)

Crucially, distrust entails a break in the political relationship and is not simply a reflection of the inability to make a decision to either trust or distrust. Withholding judgment, either due to lack of sufficient information or conflicting evidence, is often expressed in terms of being sceptical or uncertain, but it does not entail either positive or negative expectations. It denotes ambiguity. Distrust, however, is a reflection of negative evaluations and expectations from the operation of the political agent in question. The three states should be distinguished when citizens express attitudes towards specific parts of the political system, but also the political system as a whole. Trust denotes a belief that the system functions in the designated manner to produce positive outcomes for citizens. Distrust denotes the belief that the system functions in a way that produces negative outcomes: for example it fails to protect their rights as citizens, it fails to give them the opportunity to make their voice heard with their vote and it fails to promote the best-interest of citizens like themselves in society. Yet, it is possible to neither trust nor distrust, to think that the political system is not functioning satisfactorily but that it is not infringing upon your rights and interests either. Therefore, political distrust has a distinct meaning and leads to a different cognitive state and behavioural motivations than the lack of trust. It is this meaning and cognitive state that are often overlooked when research is framed solely in terms of trust. Consider the following two extracts, where two participants express their evaluations of the political class in their country:

> Yes, they do a decent job, but they [***] up from time to time. And they [***] up pretty badly, and when they do, it sort of rebases everyone's trust in the system. So you kind of know that things are not going to go awfully wrong, but they are not going to go amazingly either. (UK-1105)

> Because the truth is that these people have destroyed us. These are not politicians! Neither their politics is politics! The only thing they know how to do is to grab money. (G-3213)

Clearly, to equate these evaluations would be conceptually misleading and empirically counter-productive. It is worth noting that these two extracts refer to different political classes, the former to UK politicians and the latter to the Greek political class. The two extracts are presented as the clearest examples of non-positive orientations towards the political class, which nevertheless indicate the distinction between sceptical and properly

negative assessments of trustworthiness. Certainly, sceptical and lukewarm attitudes towards the political system were found in interviews from all three samples, as were positive and extremely negative orientations.

This dynamic nature of political distrust, the evaluation of past actions and the formation of expectations regarding future conduct set it apart from political cynicism. Narrative interviews give the interviewees the space to retrace their thoughts and explain this retrospective and prospective process step by step. When probed to elaborate on what he means in particular instances of trust betrayal, a citizen explains: "If people let you down, then you can deal with this afterwards, don't you? You deal with the consequences and you use that to form your future judgement." (UK-2106)

This interactive aspect of distrust is echoed throughout narratives and reveals a continuous process of action and reaction, feeling betrayed by untrustworthy behaviour and reacting by setting a negative baseline for future expectations. In this way, it becomes clear that citizens' understanding of political distrust is relational and characterises a dynamic process between the citizen and state institutions or the citizen and her political representatives. Whereas cynicism is better understood as a deeply rooted, general belief in the inherent evilness of politicians and in tainted political process, political distrust is dynamic and depends on retrospective and prospective assessments. Without a doubt, continuous trust-betrayal and failure of political agents to fulfil their roles build more and more evidence to sustain distrusting attitudes and can also lead to political cynicism. For example, after mentioning continuous instances of disappointment and frustration with the political system, a participant explains how she ended up considering the corruptive effect of power on human nature:

> I've begun to believe that human nature craves power to such an extent that when it gets close to it also gets completely corrupt. So, even if someone had noble intentions at the start, it becomes impossible to uphold them. […] What I am saying implies that they are all useless. Whoever governs – it doesn't matter who it is – could not govern in a trustworthy manner. (G-1204)

This stance shows a cynical attitude towards the whole idea of democratic power. Although in this case it also appears to be shaped and reinforced by personal experiences, perceptions and interpretation of events, it is important to maintain the analytic distinction between the

two concepts. The following statement by an Italian participant explaining her mistrust of the country's politicians captures this dynamic process of political distrust as action and reaction:

> I see distrust a bit in the sense that 'you made me lose it' and so it is your fault. Not trusting might be because I am a person that doesn't trust and maybe I do not trust you. But in the case of politics, they made me lose my trust! I had it before. (I-2213)

Political distrust is relational; not simply a trait of the individual citizen that expresses it, such as cynicism or a general distrusting character. It relies on assessments of the qualities of another agent. Narratives of political distrust, and especially respondents' explanations when prompted to elaborate on their views, are almost tautological: You distrust someone because they are untrustworthy. However, it is worth investigating this cyclical aspect of political distrust further. In many of the narrative extracts already recited in this section, it appears that participants fine-tune their opinions and stance given their assessment of the trustworthiness of political agents and political institutions. Being fooled repeatedly by politicians makes a citizen believe politicians are untrustworthy. Like Aesop's fable of the boy who cried wolf, that citizen will no longer believe any of the information conveyed by politicians, their manifesto pledges, their promises or their work appraisals, making it harder to identify the party that is closest to their preferences and participate in political processes giving their support. Trusting relations have been hailed in the existing literature as facilitators of cooperation, economic exchange and a requirement for tackling problems of collective action. Going back to Margaret Levi's description of reciprocity, she claimed that "[f]ailures of government representatives to uphold policy compacts, to achieve stated ends and to treat potentially trustworthy citizens as trustworthy can have disastrous effects on the extent to which citizens trust government and trust each other." (1998: 88) In effect, what we see in the narratives of participants is the establishment of negative reciprocity; believing in the untrustworthiness of the system leads people to become untrustworthy citizens in return. Evidence of citizen untrustworthiness would include a withdrawal from the political process, non-participation in elections or support for anti-systemic groups and candidates, as well as reluctance to follow policies and fulfil citizen obligations. An Italian participant gives the example of Berlusconi's economic crimes and the pervasive tax-evasion among the political elite, which makes it impossible for a citizen to play by the rules:

> They [politicians] simply continue to award themselves privileges at the expense of citizens. This is something scandalous, no? Scandalous! Then, there is the average citizen who evades taxes, and feels entitled to do so, because the political class gives a bad example. But things are, as we say, "like a dog chasing its own tail". As long as this chain of dishonesty and insolence is not broken, we will never succeed in anything. (I-1206)

This constant process of action and reaction between perceptions of untrustworthy behaviour, distrusting attitudes, further untrustworthiness and so forth can also explain why it has been extremely challenging to distinguish between the causes, the consequences and political distrust itself – both conceptually and empirically. This 'chicken and egg' dilemma can be overcome if we think of political distrust as a powerful reciprocal attitude that reinforces itself and has the possibility of forming a 'vicious circle'. It can be understood as a repeated 'trust game', where information is constantly updated and new events call for new action based on distrusting established relations – but crucially, where the citizen rarely has the option of terminating the 'game' and needs to continue 'playing' by modifying his behaviour and making decisions according to future expectations.

This is why it is important to both study political distrust in its own right, separating it from trust and the lack thereof, and to consider its implications for political behaviour and democratic governance. Although it is extremely difficult to link attitudes to behaviour empirically, narrative interviews offer citizens' own explanations for their judgments in a coherent pattern of cause and effect. Whether deciding to remove themselves from the democratic process of election altogether (removing their name from the electoral register or refusing to vote); not voting for the specific party that has betrayed their trust (e.g. the Labour Party after feeling deceived over the Iraq war or the Liberal Democrats over the university tuition fee hike); voting for radical parties in an effort to change the system (such as the Five Star Movement in Italy, Syriza and even Golden Dawn in Greece); or consciously standing up against the law and refusing to contribute any further to the citizen-state relationship (through tax evasion, the Greek 'I won't pay' movement or bribery), citizens appear to link their retrospective experiences of being let down and their prospective evaluation of the likelihood of being let down in the future to their chosen course of action. In the words of one Greek participant summing up what an untrustworthy political system means to her: "So, in practical terms this is what untrustworthiness means, in the end you become untrustworthy as well, they pass it on to you..." (G-1204)

Most definitions of political distrust encountered in the literature emphasised the role of individual perceptions and assessments. Yet so far, it has been difficult to assess what constitutes perceptions of political untrustworthiness. Political attitudes, such as distrust, have an inbuilt evaluative aspect. The second point that emerges from this cyclical and relational nature of political distrust is that in order to understand the real significance of the meaning citizens ascribe to distrust one needs to identify the evaluative processes citizens use as concretely as possible. Naturally, what is deemed trustworthy and untrustworthy conduct must depend on the particular cognitive processes every citizen's mind goes through. The outcome of evaluations is expected to vary between individuals and between national contexts, as we have already seen in interview extracts that may refer to the same event but reach different conclusions. However, following the analysis of all condensed narrative content according to recounted events, the interpretations provided by the interviewees and respective cognitive reactions, a comprehensive pattern for evaluating untrustworthiness emerges. Participants' expressions of distrust are based on three evaluative dimensions: a technical assessment, a moral assessment and an interest-congruence assessment.

4.3 Three evaluative dimensions of distrust: Technical, ethical and incongruent interests

We have already commented on some of the key themes emerging in narratives of political distrust and have attempted to uncover the meaning citizens ascribe to their assertions of distrust. In the preceding section, we presented narrative extracts that indicated how political evaluations take place in a backdrop of largely agreed democratic requirements. Whether it is political representatives, political parties, the government, political processes, such as the legislative or electoral process, or institutions, such as the national parliament or the judicial system, citizens have some idea of how politics should function and what outputs they should produce in a democratic context. Hence, an untrustworthy political system and untrustworthy political agents are those that exhibit incompetence in dealing with governing functions and failure to fulfil democratic requirements. In line with earlier conceptual work on political trust that points to a strategic evaluation of the capacities and competencies of political agents, accounts of political distrust in the narrative interviews reveal a technical evaluative dimension that focuses on past evidence and future anticipation of incompetence or inability to perform predetermined tasks. Narratives of political distrust provide many examples of

institutional failures. These evaluations follow a technical dimension leading to the belief that institutions are not functioning according to their mandate – they are failing to produce the appropriate output and they create damaging inefficiencies for the entire system. The same line of evaluation underlines expressions of distrust in government, politicians or groups of political figures. For political figures, distrusting technical evaluations entail the conviction that politicians are not doing their job, that they are unable to perform competently in government and that they fail to deliver on their promises. For example, an interviewee thinking about the political response to the financial crisis in Greece explains his disappointment:

> Because even in the beginning of the crisis we expected a different approach, a little better management of things, some more actions rather than words, and ultimately what did we see? (G-1102)

Accounts of distrust in many narratives follow this evaluative dimension. Participants evaluate governments on the basis of their success or failure to govern, pass laws and manage the economy, public services and other domains of government. Another participant perceives failures of public services as a political failure, which underpins her evaluations of parliament:

> When a country's healthcare system is malfunctioning to such an extent – and it completely malfunctions – it all starts from politics. When inside the Parliament 300 people cannot vote the right laws, how can you respect them and hold them to high esteem? They are less than nothing. (G-3213)

It was mentioned also in earlier sections that a failure of representatives to represent their constituents feeds a lot of negative evaluations of politicians and the political system in its entirety, for perpetuating this exclusionary type of democratic politics. This is often perceived as an unsound influence on political processes. Many respondents in the UK for example lament the uniform background of politicians and the impact this has on their ability to govern successfully. A participant describes her political institutions as follows: "It's almost like an 'all boys network', I know there's women, but that's the first thing that comes to mind. It feels like it's not really talking for or standing up for us. That's my feeling." (UK-3212) Another elaborates on his apprehension of the political process:

> You see the people who are in power and they all come from the same public schools, Eton and what's what, the elitism. And there just seems to be a circularity, people go to the Parliament, they get their agendas through, whatever currently is going to win them more votes. It's all so cyclical and so short-termist. (UK-1105)

Another side of political distrust expressed by citizens entail a type of verdict, which does not necessarily have to do with the perceived technical failures of political agents and inability to provide desired results. It refers to perceptions of unethical political conduct and outcomes judged to be unfair or morally wrong. The second evaluative dimension of political distrust follows a normative assessment of political practices. While the normative aspect of trust has been discussed in earlier conceptual work, it has been harder to identify in empirical studies of political distrust. Moralistic trust, as defined by Uslaner (2002), is understood to stem from a shared set of fundamental moral values within a community and to be a characteristic of the truster that reflects their view of the world. The moral evaluative dimension of distrust that we see emerging through the narratives is rather different, in the sense that it is not the absence of shared norms or generalised moral worldview. Expressions of political distrust make a clear moral claim: political conduct has violated ethical norms considered to be objective and shared by the political community. It is this violation that triggers citizens to describe political agents as untrustworthy. We have already considered expressions of distrust phrased in terms of manipulation, betrayal and deception, such as being lied to, tricked or fooled by political agents. The ethical connotations of such complaints emerge clearly from citizen accounts. It is not only simply a matter of failure, but of reprehensible actions that motivate judgments of untrustworthiness. Narratives also show expressions of distrust in politicians for "having no shame" (I-1109), for stealing from the state, or serving big interests at the expense of citizens. Such behaviour is judged to be objectively *wrong*, going against notions of what is *right* and *fair*, and provides the basis for subsequent evaluations of the ethical standing of political agents.

Although ethical assessments of political conduct lend themselves more readily to evaluations of individuals or groups of people, they are equally prominent in institutional and policy evaluations. The focus of those assessments is on shared notions of justice and fairness. Interviewees across all three countries explained distrust by referring to unjust laws that are too hard on the weakest citizens, special privileges for certain social groups, the lack of punishment for wrongdoings among politicians and the institutionalised abuse of power. A

citizen explains his loss of faith in politicians saying that: "It will be restored only if these people who comprise the politics of our country manage to do something that is fair at last! Make those who have money pay, those that need to pay, who owe billions to the state anyway." (G-3213) Even with respect to specific policies, their fairness reflects an overall evaluation of distrust in the political class enforcing them:

> When taking such measures that are not always fair…for example, they enforce the *charatsi*[8] and they don't take into account that someone has only a primary residence, is unemployed, has no other income, you see? So this increases untrustworthiness, that's for sure. (G-1201)

It is important to note that perceived untrustworthiness following this evaluation is a type of behaviour deemed to be wrong not solely according to the speaker, in the sense of her having been personally disadvantaged, but unjust according to her normative understanding of the world. Interpretations of the Iraq invasion as "wrong in every sense" or political decisions that are seen to circumvent the constitution in order to maintain big business interests against the will of the people are all parts of expressions of distrust that make a strong moral claim. Normative frameworks may differ between individuals to some extent, and so do their individual judgments. Nevertheless, the prominence of ethical claims embedded in judgements of political distrust indicates that political roles, positions of authority and institutional functions are judged by citizens using a normative framework. Perceptions of untrustworthiness may also entail a moral argument about the effect political decisions have on society. A participant in the UK attributes responsibility for unhealthy divisions within her community to politicians' political choices and rhetoric:

> And that's the point I made earlier. On the left, the middle and the right – we don't have a left really – so, in the middle and the right they are all coming from a very narrow educational and experiential background. They have not experienced what it's like not to have. So then you see it makes it even more wrong that they go ahead and use them [the financially weakest members of society] as scapegoats, when you haven't got a hope in hell in knowing what it's like. And we are actually becoming a much more divided society. (UK-3213)

Finally, the third dimension of political distrust that surfaces from the interviews is the evaluation of diverging interests. This evaluative dimension can easily be conflated with

[8] "Charatsi" is a colloquial term for a horizontal additional tax imposed by the first Memorandum in Greece. The tax is an annual contribution per house that is non-progressive and is charged and collected via bills of the publicly owned electricity provider.

technical and ethical considerations, yet it appears to have a distinct meaning and provides a different basis for potential reversal of distrusting attitudes. The interest-based evaluative dimension of political distrust refers to the expectation that a political agent will fail to protect the citizen's personal interests and will act against their individual political preferences. As mentioned before, political distrust characterises a relationship between the citizen and the political agent under evaluation. Consequently, it also depends on the perceived closeness of preferences, level of identification with and reciprocity between the citizen and that political agent. Such considerations are prominent in evaluations of political representatives, partisan political players, such as political parties and governments, but are also important in distrusting judgments of institutional agents, policies and political outputs. Central evaluations in this dimension refer to politicians not caring about the citizen or group of people the citizen identifies with, and a belief that their best interest will not be safeguarded. A participant praising the good job politicians are doing in his area expresses a different evaluation on the basis of whether politicians are doing a good job specifically for him:

> Well, that's different, isn't it? That's about whether my politics is being listened to, which assumes that I know what my politics is…And I am not sure I know what my politics is. I know what I am not, but I don't think that what I think is entirely in accord with one political group […]. And because I work in the arena I work [arts], I think that none of our political representatives give enough time, attention, money – crucially – to culture. Certainly, the financial investments that are being made year after year, by government after government are disproportionately prejudiced against culture and art. (UK-2108)

This dimension also emerges in partisan evaluations, where individuals may trust a specific political party or politician to protect them but distrust the motives of other parties and the effect their policies might have on their life. Many participants refer to *clientelistic* political practices and their place outside this 'relationship' to explain their negative expectations regarding future political outcomes, as well as particular evidence of behaviour contrary to their preferences, such as the Liberal Democrat support for increased tuition fees and Labour support for the Iraq war in the UK:

> I will tell you what I think. I believe that those who are close to a politician, those that are near, are fine. Nobody cares about those who are further away – the rest of us – so there is no trust. Those who are close are taken care of… there is a connection. […] I have nothing to do with all that, nothing at all. The

> politician has a clientele of 100-200 people whom he can take care of, the rest are nothing. (G-2108)

Returning to the earlier discourse on representation and the importance of feeling represented by at least some political player, we can see that political distrust judgments entail such interest-based evaluations. Distrust fuelled by perceptions of diverging interests marks a breakdown in the reciprocal relationship between the citizen and the political agent. If these evaluations take place at a specific level, referring to a political party or politician, participants explain that this break may lead them to search for alternative political players. When diverging interests are perceived at the institutional and systemic level, it is much harder to find such alternatives. The following quote shows that for this citizen representation of her interests is an important consideration in her attitude towards politics:

> So you see all these kinds of agendas that serve certain people, but in terms of what is important to me, I don't see stuff that is relevant for me, and I don't see stuff that is relevant for people who are disabled or ill. (UK-1210)

It is important to note that although interview data indicates the presence of these three dimensions in the meaning of political distrust, they are not always clearly discernible. For example, interest-based evaluations can often assume a moral or even technical dimension, as actions that violate one's own personal preference are also often thought to be objectively unfair or against the commonly agreed function of a political agent. However, recognising that distrust judgments can be based on any of these three evaluative processes is a significant step forward in our understanding of the concept of political distrust and its formation. Consider the following two extracts from the same narrative of a young Italian:

> But you shouldn't make an old poor man pay, who might not even have money to put a chair in his house, just like that! Here you are, this has destroyed people….
>
> That's what I mean by the loss of my identity. Because I have to go out and study for five years away from home, and then I have to get work experience abroad, to even be accepted for a minimum consideration for a job application, or for someone to see me. And then comes the first – [***] in this case – who hasn't studied, they bought him a degree and when they went to interview him, he did not even know where the degree was bought from, so he couldn't even answer. And so, you give Italy to the hands of these people… It saddens me, and it really has been given to the hands of these people. (I-3202)

The first extract refers to a housing tax policy in Italy that the participant perceives to be deeply unjust for the weakest members of society and clearly evokes sentiments of unfairness. In the second extract, however, the interviewee uses the example of a politician's son, who undeservedly became a parliamentarian, to express her anger and distrust in the whole political system. She describes a situation that goes against her interests and disadvantages her personally, but also against her moral view of the world, whereby people of merit should govern. Similarly, perceptions of corruption and scandals often evoke a combination of three evaluative dimensions of political distrust. Consider the following extract where a participant from the UK explains her personal decision to distrust the political system, referring to a series of perceived political failures:

> I have always grown up with Muslims, Asians, being portrayed as the bad guys in the media and I don't see any representativeness really in the Parliament, and I think that we have always felt like the outsider. And then I have my opportunity to become an insider and I said, "that's great, I can go and effect things", but then I saw the opposite, which is just corruption or gain. So I haven't seen anything, to be honest with you that really inspires me and makes me think this is ethical, because it doesn't feel ethical to me. (UK-1210)

Corruption in particular features prominently in many expressions of political distrust. Bribery, for example, is morally reproached as an act that goes against shared norms in a functioning political system. But pervasive bribery and corruption also force a system to operate inefficiently, creating waste, lack of competition and meritocracy and contributing to technical failures. Finally, respondents with a personal experience of bribery and corruption, such as having to pay for a service they should be entitled to, certainly consider this an act that harms their best-interest. Again, it is important to note that these evaluations are based on individual perceptions and individual frames of references that could differ considerably between different people and societies in the outcomes they produce. Although there were no specific examples in any of the interview accounts collected during this research, there were allusions to situations where engaging in such corruption could be beneficial for one's best-interest and could be perceived as a morally acceptable way of getting things done in a society. In such cases, what becomes most prominent in the decision to distrust is the closeness of the relationship and the belief that the citizen's personal best-interest is in line with that of the political agent.

4.4 The 'political' in political distrust

Throughout this thesis, and particularly throughout this chapter, we have argued in favour of the relational nature of distrust, based both on conceptual and empirical evidence. As in the case of the rational approach to trust, which is understood in the format of 'A trusts B', distrust also requires defining the two players (the one who distrusts and the one who is distrusted) as well as the relationship between them. We have already investigated the nature of this relationship and the meaning citizens ascribe to distrusting judgments following technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations to determine the trustworthiness of political actors. We have also seen that in most narratives, expressions of distrust are attached to a political actor or aspects of the political system deemed to be untrustworthy. Two questions follow the observations we have made thus far. Firstly, can we identify these political actors and provide a meaningful categorisation for the components of the political system citizens claim to distrust? Secondly, do citizens arrive at different evaluations for different parts of the political system, say for the political party they support, the prime minister, the national parliament or the political system in its entirety, and if so, how are these distrusting attitudes related to or influencing each other? If we are to advance our conceptual model of political distrust we need to address these questions and better define the 'political' in attitudes of political distrust.

One of the most contested issues in the literature is whether expressions of political distrust towards political targets are attitudes that can be distinguished empirically or simply examples of a single attitude of political distrust. Such questions have preoccupied researchers studying attitudes of political support since the establishment of political trust batteries in mass surveys. As discussed earlier in this thesis, part of the scholarly debate surrounding the interpretation of political distrust indicators stems from diverging interpretations of what 'political' stands for, both conceptually and operationally, in the widely used measurement tools (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974a; Hooghe, 2011). Unfortunately, the debate is far from being resolved conclusively; however this volume of original empirical evidence that contains citizens' own expressions of political distrust could provide insights into this issue. Revisiting existing studies on attitudes of political support, parts of the political system are usually ordered from the specific to the diffuse levels (Almond and Vebra, 1980; Norris, 1999). Following this categorisation, we also find political distrust throughout respondent narratives to be attributed to the following objects: (i) individual

politicians, groups of politicians, the entire political class; (ii) an individual political party, governing parties, the entire party system; (iii) representative political institutions; and finally, (iv) the political system, including all political and state institutions, processes, players and outputs.[9]

One of the dilemmas in the existing literature has to do with distrust at the systemic level and whether it reflects distrust of institutional arrangements or merely distrust of incumbent political figures. We have already noted that expressions of distrust at the institutional level present an added layer of complexity, as they may be focused on the failure of the institutional set-up and its operation, which would require complete overhaul and transformation, or they may be contained in the failures of the particular individuals currently running those institutions. Even in the case of evaluations of national parliament, the most prominent institution of representative democracy in all three countries under study and most widely used survey indicator for political trust in European surveys, there is no consensus as to whether one should evaluate parliamentarians or the institutional process. The extracts below are taken from participant interviews in the same national context, highlighting the ambiguity entailed in evaluations at the institutional level, even among citizens in the same political system.

> I separate them, yes, because it is a different thing the quality of the people and a different thing the quality of the institution. The institution works fine. It is an achievement of democracy, of the *metapoliteusi*[10] era. The institution works fine. Now, its members, whether everyone is competent and useful, that's another thing. (G-1201)

> You identify the Parliament more with the people inside, at least I do. I understand that I should not do it, because obviously it can change and it is the basis of a political regime, but it is intertwined in my mind with those contained in it. It makes more sense and it is more personal this way. I mean, the logic says that the Parliament is the mechanism of governance, but the feeling says that the Parliament consists of some people who are not adequate. At this stage, I'm more with the feeling. (G-1203)

[9] This list does not include what is often identified in the literature as the highest diffuse level, which is 'regime principles'. Whereas it is clear that regime principles and ideals feature heavily in citizens' evaluations of their political world, trust and distrust are relational concepts and they require an expectation of trustworthy or untrustworthy behaviour. Hence, distrust cannot characterise the relationship between a citizen and a principle or ideal, although other notions such as support could.

[10] *Metapoliteusi* refers to the on-going period of democratic rule in Greece following the military *junta* and the restoration of democracy in 1974.

> The system and the politicians are so close that it is impossible to separate them. (G-1107)

The distinction is conceptually important, because when distrusting attitudes are established at the diffuse level, they are much more difficult to reverse. Yet empirically, the separation seems to be more ambigious. When distrust is attributed to specific incumbents, as in the first extract, it can be contained at that level if citizens believe that potentially more trustworthy individuals could replace them. Consider the following quote from a narrative where despite the initial judgement of distrust, as new information about institutional practices is processed, untrustworthiness is attributed to one specific politician and not the systemic level:

> That was when the public system, that was when the British system was really let down. And I think it was Tony Blair and Alistair Campbell who were manipulating that because they wanted to go to war with Iraq. And I never ever understand why we did that. It was wrong, at every level to start invading Iraq. And we lost so many soldiers, just to help America do something. We shouldn't ever have been doing that and I think that we were lied to about these weapons of mass destruction. That was terrible. It was a disgrace.... Well you hope that the system will prevent that from happening again. And I think the fact that David Cameron wasn't able to get involved in Syria was a really positive thing, yes. (UK-1209)

These quotes indicate that ring-fencing the institutional level from evaluations of untrustworthiness results in a markedly different approach to the political system. If negative evaluations are established at the diffuse level, they can easily spill-over to all parts of the political system (political players, institutions, processes and outputs) and are hard to reverse without systemic reform or radical action. Consider the following two extracts from interviews with Italian citizens, explaining political untrustworthiness spilling-over. The first refers to the country's legislature and the latter argues that given the repeated failures of all governments – of the left and of the right – in Italy, the best way forward for the country would be an overhaul of elected governments in favour of external expert decision-making:

> And this gives a sense of impartiality, and hence, it makes people mistrust and it reverberates through everything. It reverberates through the institutions…we do not trust them! The Parliament makes laws that convenience the "usual suspects", but we need laws that will help put the country back in its place. The only thing they know how to do is to burden citizens with taxes. (I-1104)

> I have a theory, that is a bit short, but obviously I don't know how it can be done, maybe it can then be done a bit softer. I would annihilate completely what the government is today, whether it is of the right, of the left, of

> everything and any political faction. I would trust, how it was last year and up until a few months ago, what we called an external commission, I don't know how to say it. (I-1207)

The idea that no politician or political party can change the culture of untrustworthiness the citizen perceives to be widespread in the political system leads them, in this case, to support other alternatives to elected governance, such as external technocrats. Narratives of distrust show how repeated instances of trust betrayal can build up and generate distrust that spills over to the generic level. For example, repeated promise-breaking or outright lying from politicians of all political groups presented in earlier extracts has led many respondents to express disbelief in the entire political class and call into question the moral standing and competence of those in positions of authority. Trust betrayal from political actors that were especially regarded as protecting and representing a citizen's best-interest are particularly powerful. We commented in previous sections on the importance citizens attach to the political system's capacity to make them feel represented. Many citizens consider a political party or politician they have supported to provide this link to representation, and expect positive outcomes from the political conduct of such agents, reflected in their decisions, policy-making, processes and outputs. A relation of distrust developed at this level is also damaging for the citizen-state relationship, as it denotes a break in the link the citizen has developed with the democratic political system. In the following extract, a participant recounts her attempt to get involved in local initiatives with the political party she supported, when she was faced with inappropriate practices that led her to abandon politics and cease voting altogether. She claimed:

> Having that kind of responsibility was really good, but I have just seen so much negativity and I've seen so much corruption, and I don't see any plans to make a difference. I see that Labour is the same, they are all just the same: Labour, Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats – those are your three choices really – and they are all the same. They are just corporate machines. (UK-1210)

This extract captures distrust spilling over from one local context and one political party – the party the participant believed in – to the entire party system. Similar reactions were also presented in response to the failure of the Liberal Democratic Party to block the coalition's policy of university tuition fees increase and social policy, the Democratic Party (PD) in Italy joining a coalition government with Berlusconi's centre-right PdL party, and the perception of the two main political parties in Greece as failing to protect the lower and middle classes

once the financial crisis set in. For participants who had supported these political parties, perceptions of untrustworthiness proved damaging for their overall association with the political system.

We have seen that distrusting attitudes can be formed towards specific political agents, but at the same time that such attitudes can spill over to characterise a general stance towards the entire political system. We find expressions of distrust are often grounded in the evaluation of particular evidence and events, which spill over to the diffuse level, yet this is not the only process that is at play. We also see that many of the concrete events are brought in to support an initial observation citizens make regarding their distrust of politicians or political institutions in general, and are therefore examples used to explain an overarching attitude of political distrust. Political psychology suggests that perceptions about the 'whole' are more powerful in influencing perceptions about the 'parts', rather than the other way around. Citizens are in constant interaction with politics, by virtue of living, working and abiding by the laws of political communities, and general attitudes of political distrust, trust or lack of trust are formed to help them navigate their political lives. Hence, when asked to elaborate on a comment they have made, participants will often state, "Why do I say this? Well…" before continuing to provide further explanations. This indicates that many participants have an overall attitude that is readily available, even before the specific examples of distrust formation are retrieved.

This observation refers to the difficulty of distinguishing between political distrust that functions as a relational evaluation between the citizen and each political player based on their perception of competencies, intentions and track record, and political distrust that functions as an overarching guiding principle for future interactions with political agents and other political behaviour. We have highlighted this puzzle in the preceding chapters, focusing on the conceptual framework for the study of political distrust judgments. Is it, therefore, fair to say that citizens distinguish between the trustworthiness of each and every actor within the political system? Or do they rely on an overall evaluation of political processes to guide their expectations of future untrustworthy conduct in their dealings with political actors?

The theory of citizens as 'cognitive misers' suggests the latter is a more realistic depiction of citizen behaviour. When it comes to evaluating politics in everyday life, expecting citizens to form distinct judgments for each political institution and political player is too demanding.

Whether it is because of lack of information, laziness or even lack of time to devote to such evaluation processes, citizens are called on to decide whether to trust or distrust political agents based on a more readily available generalised attitude. We find a considerable amount of such overarching attitudes in expressions of distrust. A participant speaking about the multiple failures across his local area, lack of job prospects, lack of investment and a crumbling infrastructure, even the inability of keeping the constituency clean, assures me: "Who is to blame? Definitely not me! Now, I don't know exactly if the mayor is to blame, if politicians are to blame or whoever… But in essence, those who govern are to blame, not me!" (G-2111) The ability to attribute blame for perceived failures is a key aspect of the decision to distrust, but in many cases, blame is attributed to the 'people who govern' in general. On the other hand, a more involved participant working in the area of construction for local public services lamented the lack of accurate identification of political players. Being understandably more knowledgeable about the workings of the local level and interested in its performance he explained:

> You have to think of institutions as a ladder. There are varying degrees, the municipality, the region, the state, the European Union. And often a lot of us get confused when we judge them... but that is a cultural aspect more than anything else. If I go to the municipality and the municipality gives me a bad service – I go to the clerk, the clerk is never there, I request a certificate, the certificate comes a month after I needed it – we say it's the inefficiency of the municipality. Then, I know that it was the municipality that has bad service, but I always tend to pass it on to the state, although it wasn't the state doing this. We have to distinguish. (I-3103)

These two accounts support the deficiency model for political evaluations, as they both point in their own way to the cognitive burden entailed in distinguishing and formulating specific expectations for each political agent citizens interact.

Therefore, looking at all participants' accounts of political distrust through the narratives, it appears that, at least empirically, both processes are at play. Respondents are largely able to evaluate particular political objects, such as their preferred political party, the government, and the prime minister, using concrete examples and information regarding the actions of these actors which led them to distrust; however they also synthesise and combine it all in an overarching attitude, which in turn influences the way they may process new information. The two processes are not incompatible. The narrative interviews give citizens the opportunity to elaborate and retrace thought processes that led to their decisions to distrust.

Yet, at the same time interviews show that citizens make inferences using their trust or distrust in politics in general. These are built through multiple experiences and evaluations that have been synthesised or perceived failures that are attributed to the diffuse political level.

Thus, we need to establish a model of distrust that reconciles the two processes. Political distrust is expressed as a specific attitude grounded in evaluations of incompetence, unethical conduct and diverging interests. At the same time, there is also a general, overall political distrust attitude, which is formed from all specific experiences of distrust, all information and evidence stored in the memory of citizens and fused together to produce a single overall stance towards the political system. Due to the cyclical nature inherent to the concept of distrust as previously explained, this overall attitude provides a cognitive screen for new stimuli, which colours the interpretation of new information and experiences in a negative or positive manner. Both are aspects of political distrust and both are integral to understanding how citizens express, understand and are motivated by political distrusting attitudes.

This dual function of distrusting attitudes allows us to account for the powerful influence distrust has on other evaluations as a heuristic cognitive shortcut, and for the dynamic nature of distrust, which makes it responsive to political changes. It is possible for citizens that do not hold an overall distrusting attitude towards the political system to express distrust towards specific politicians, groups or time periods. We also see participants who, although they begin their discourse with an extremely distrusting attitude towards the whole political class and the political system at large, will also single out their preferred political party, which they perceive to be a political player willing to protect their best-interest (and often consider it to be more competent and to have a morally sound approach to common matters). They may even single out new governments and new politicians, giving them at least the benefit of the doubt and reserving judgment until further evidence is available. A participant asked about his view of politics in his country begun by saying: “I have zero trust in Italian politicians, zero! Less than zero! I repeat, zero! Because they do whatever they want, they enjoy themselves, they serve their own interests, with our money!” However even after this initial statement he went on to express a more positive view, or at least reserve judgment regarding a specific political figure and new government: “There are some cases, maybe now we can give a bit of space to the Letta government, hoping a bit that they will do something good for the country. A bit let’s say.” (I-1111)

Ignoring either side of political distrust would not allow us to account for all its multifaceted functions. Thinking of political distrust solely as an overarching evaluation of an untrustworthy political system would fail to account for variations of distrust in different parts of the political system, partisan groups, individuals, and local, regional, national and European levels of governance, which we observe in practice. We would also be unable to explain what gives rise to this attitude in the first place, how it is formed and why it would vary throughout someone's lifetime. If we do not allow for specific evaluations to take place – for citizens to consider new events, experiences and information through their exchanges with politics – then political distrust would not be responsive to political changes. On the other hand, if we only focus on the dynamic evaluations of political distrust that are grounded in specific experiences and events and projected as expectations of further untrustworthy behaviour, we would fail to account for the cyclical nature of distrust and the way in which participants appear to synthesise their attitude towards politics overall to justify their own predisposition, reactions and behavioural intentions.

4.5 Emotive responses and behavioural intentions

A relatively unexplored aspect of political distrust is the distinct cognitive and emotional responses that such attitudes evoke, which was captured through popular narrative interviews. Expressions of political distrust are often accompanied by negative emotional reactions of anger, disappointment, sadness, despair and distress. All three evaluative dimensions – technical, ethical and especially considerations of interest congruence – can give rise to anger or disappointment. A Democratic Party supporter in Italy speaking in disappointment about the PD-PdL post-election coalition, which promised to dissolve itself once it passed reforms, declared "[s]o, if once more you have fooled us, I think that in the next election there will be a cataclysm!" (I-1206)

When such views of having been repeatedly 'deceived', 'manipulated' or 'fooled' spread distrusting attitudes to the systemic level, the emotional state of citizens moves to fear, insecurity and even despair. One of the interviewees from Greece explains that after so much lying "it is absolutely clear that there is always something underneath that we do not know

about and that we are being played like dumb pawns." (G-3206) While for another interviewee, the actions of the national parliament create even greater insecurity that stems from the institutional level:

> I don't know what the dawn will bring for me. Today they say one thing, tomorrow they change it to another. They change the laws every day. Every day there are new laws! (G-2111)

Fear and uncertainty are omnipresent in expressions of strong political distrust. This is another insight that emerges from our focus on political distrust compared to trust. We know from research in psychology that a state of trust entails expectations of stability and normalcy, although expressions of political trust are seldom accompanied by strong emotive responses. An interviewee explaining his overall attitude claims: "They [politicians] are people who have got their own merit, they have been trusted into those positions haven't they? And if I didn't trust them, what is the alternative really? Worrying? Panicking?" (UK-3102) An established relationship of distrust between a citizen and a political object denotes a certain degree of conviction about future conduct, yet those expectations are of a negative or harmful nature. In the case of politics, whereby citizens cannot entirely remove themselves from the relationship, as it might be possible in instances of interpersonal rapports, citizens recognise they are still being affected in a multitude of ways by untrustworthy politicians and the political system despite their wish not to be. Another participant, speaking about the current governance of the country, states: "It brings such a terrifying sense of insecurity. I think they [the government] are deceiving us." (G-2209) Even if a citizen distrusts a specific political party and decides not to vote for it, it is still possible that this party will be chosen to govern their country, city or council. More importantly, even when citizens accept that their legislature is malfunctioning, and that parliamentarians write laws with disregard to the country's best-interest, there is still uncertainty and fear on how these operations will affect their lives. An Italian participant explains his view of the country's broken political system: "We have great fear, because we know that politicians cannot change this situation, and hence they think more about their best-interest than of the welfare of the people." (I-2112)

Hence, in light of the conviction regarding harmful anticipated outcomes, expressions of political distrust are frequently accompanied with a behavioural intention of removing oneself from the citizen-state relationship by physically moving away from the country or refusing to abide by the rules of the rapport. This type of expression was found mostly in

narratives from Italy and Greece, where it is no doubt related to the dire economic situation that many citizens faced at the time of the interviews. But it was also found in UK narratives, in the form of removing oneself from voting registries or physically moving away from the country in times where the political programme implemented was in stark contrast with their principles and political preferences. When thinking about instances of profound distrust a participant refers to the period of Thatcher's reforms in the 1980s, before adding the impact of war:

> The nearest it ever got for me was in the 1980s. Once Thatcher started her, let's call it a "reformation", rather than an attack. Once she started her "reformation" of how society worked, and I am sure that was a conscious thing, it became a country that I was profoundly uncomfortable about living in, but not quite so uncomfortable that, a) I did anything, or b) I left. Lots of people did leave. I didn't. That's the nearest I've got to feeling that we've done things wrong…Except every time we go to war! (UK-2103)

As more and more research explores the influence of emotive states upon citizens' political behaviour, it becomes evident that the emotive aspect of political attitudes is a relevant and important area to investigate. Attitudes of political distrust give rise to a complex set of emotive responses that can have a motivating or demotivating effect on future political action. For example, we know from advances in this strand of political behaviour research that anger is a negative but motivating emotion that pushes individuals towards action. Anger due to distrust towards a specific political output or political group can lead individuals to try to take action and attempt to block or alter this part of their political system. However, narratives of political distrust have also uncovered that when distrust expands across all political levels and political groups, emotive responses shift to uncertainty, fear and disgust. These are negative, demobilising emotive states that lead to a different set of cognitive responses and behavioural intentions, namely disaffection and an effort to remove oneself from the reach of the political processes that induce this psychological state of insecurity. Further investigation into these affective responses can bring new insights into how new radical political parties capitalise on political distrust by inducing anger towards the political establishment and mobilising citizen support, as well as the puzzle of the association of political distrust, lack of trust/distrust and trust with political disaffection.

4.6 Political distrust from the citizens' perspective and conclusions

Popular narrative interviews can help to conceptualise political distrust in its own right and disentangle it from competing notions of cynicism and lack of trust. Using empirical evidence, we argued that the reciprocal nature of distrust sets it apart from attitudes of political cynicism, which are used to describe an established view of a citizen against their political system, with no room for the consideration of new evidence. Therefore, while it is highly possible that antecedents of distrust and even political distrust itself could result in cynicism, it is important to maintain that they are conceptually distinct and focus on possible avenues to reverse distrust.

Similarly, citizen accounts of distrusting judgments point to clearly negative expectations emerging from political processes, which contrast with sceptical attitudes and a lack of trust. We argued that lack of trust, or lack of distrust for that matter, is a distinct state that can potentially characterise the relationship between a citizen and a political object. Whether it is due to lack of information, inability or unwillingness to evaluate the said object, it is possible that a citizen might not hold convictions regarding positive or negative outcomes from interactions with political agents. This is evident in a series of narratives regarding little understood EU institutions, such as the European Parliament, or individuals who claim trust and distrust are not fit concepts for political analysis, since trust requires levels of information that can never be attained. Following the academic focus placed on the rise of democratic expectations and critical citizenry, it is also important to distinguish between those who demand further transparency and better politics and those that feel betrayed by their politicians and targeted by the policies and institutions that were set up to represent them. The latter case of political distrust marks a breakdown in the relationship between citizens and their representatives and leads to different expression and behavioural motivation.

Further, narrative interviews have allowed us to pick apart expressions of distrust and explore the evaluative processes entailed in the decision to distrust, trust or reserve judgment. The three evaluative dimensions in political distrust emerging from this analysis are in line with theoretical understandings and existing work on political attitudes of trust and distrust. Considerations about technical competence, economic performance and institutional functions have been discussed at length in Chapter 2 and have featured as dependent

variables in numerous empirical micro and macro-level studies, despite having focused mainly on indicators of trust. The normative claims that trusting relations entail can also be found in existing analytical work, though they have been more difficult to capture empirically. Finally, the dimension of interest congruence could be traced back to the notion of trust as encapsulated interest, focusing on the potential benefit a citizen expects to receive from interactions with a political actor. Nevertheless, until now these three dimensions have not been placed together as conceptual parts of political distrust grounded in the analysis of empirical evidence.

It is important to note that the three evaluative dimensions were fused together more often than they were found in isolation. Citizens expressing distrust often resorted to a combination of these judgments, and though many participants appeared to rely more on the moral evaluative dimension, it was rare to find evaluations of the same political actor on polar opposites across different dimensions. Many of the extracts presented in the earlier sections of this chapter show this synthesis of negative evaluations in the case of corrupt practices (pp.114, 126) or interest-based and technical negative orientations when evaluating political representatives (pp.109, 111). This finding is not surprising, in so far as the evaluations of political targets and the political system influence each other for reasons discussed in Chapter 2 and earlier sections of this Chapter. Despite the tendency of these evaluations to move in tandem, identifying the technical, moral and interest-based judgments in distrusting attitudes is an important step, firstly, for establishing conceptual clarity, and secondly, because it gives us the opportunity to further investigate how these evaluative dimensions interact with each other and how they motivate political behaviour. As mentioned above, citizens appear to synthesise and weigh information that will lead them to trust or distrust, but it is possible that some dimensions are more important than others in the evaluation of trustworthiness of different political targets. Some respondents appear to give higher priority to certain evaluations than others. For example, a UK respondent evaluating political representatives values ethical conduct more than technical competence:

> If you accept that no human being is infallible, then they shouldn't be pilloried for that, unless they are being dishonest either ideologically or practically. Well if you are saying one thing and doing another thing, then you are being ideologically dishonest. The sort of thing where you say "I believe in equality for all men, but black people should go home" that sort of thing. But if you make a mistake, then that should be forgiven. (UK-2108)

These differences are evident not only among different participants, but also among different groups or generations. A young participant from Italy explains that he thinks he evaluates the trustworthiness of the political system in a different way than his parents and the older generation based on these three dimensions:

> You can see it above all with Grillo and the M5S[11], this type of translation of distrust…in the end the distrust is a sentiment, right? But you can also rationalise it. In my opinion, people like me and those below the age of 40 tend to rationalise it in this way: it doesn't matter whether someone is truly good or truly honest, what matters is that once he is exposed, whether I can punish him or not. It's more a discourse of accountability, let's say, a more retrospective view. Those who are older and have been socialised in the time of the First Republic, with big ideologies before the fall of the Berlin Wall, my parents or others, tend to view it, certainly in such a way because of what has happened in the past few years with all the scandals, but underneath it all they have specific expectations. They say, "I want a politician that cuts the tax on the first house", "I want a politician that will protect pensions", "I want a politician…" and so they have a point of view that is a bit more geared to the actual mandate. (I-2115)

Operationalising distrust in a way that includes the different evaluative dimensions will allow for a more in-depth investigation of how these dimensions and time projections interact. Narrative interviews have shown that although citizens' judgments of political distrust appear to operate in a similar manner across different people, they are highly contingent on a number of factors. These include the citizen's normative framework, their understanding of the rules and responsibilities of a particular political role and their ability to assess success or failure. It is also a function of their personal preferences, identification with particular groups and interests, which could also include many of their personality characteristics as identified in earlier research on generalised trust (Uslaner, 2002).

The exercise of building a conceptual model for political distrust judgments based on empirical qualitative evidence has led us to consider all such influences and functions of distrusting evaluations. It is important to note that the judgements and processes of evaluation are highly personal and possibly differ amongst any two individuals. Although expectations of distrust are formed following the same three evaluating dimensions across the sample of

[11] MV5 or 'Movimento Cinque Stelle' is the anti-systemic Five Star Movement party in Italy gained electoral support and approval in the 2013 elections. The party was created by comedian Beppe Grillo and attracted young citizens advocating change.

interviews, each individual citizen may reach a different judgment of political distrust based on his/her own past experiences, personal characteristics, views and beliefs. This has led many researchers to focus more on the characteristics of the 'trusters' and to develop an individual level theory of generalised trusters/general distrusters. There is good reason to believe that our attitudes towards life will shape our attitudes towards politics. There is also evidence that personal experience and character, and the general life attitudes they create, influence one's ability to develop trusting relations or propensity to develop attitudes of distrust at the social and political levels. However, the effects of personality and general attitudes to life are not incompatible with the strategic evaluations of specific political targets or the political system in general. In fact they should be correlated to a citizen's perceptions of political untrustworthiness. To speak about general trusters and general distrusters might have theoretical and empirical validity, but without making any reference to the reasons why political agents are judged to be untrustworthy, it is very limiting in developing our understanding of political distrust.

By focusing on the relationship of distrust between citizens and political agents we have been able to disentangle the meaning and evaluative dimensions presented in the conceptual model in Chapter 2. However, at the same time we have also identified political distrust as an overarching attitude towards the political system that is readily available to citizens and can act as a heuristic mechanism, spilling over to evaluations of all other political actors and colouring subsequent information-processing and decision-making. The question of dimensionality of political distrust attitudes will be analysed and discussed extensively in the following chapter using quantitative data. In this chapter's concluding remarks, it is useful to consider another explanation that supports the conceptualisation of political distrust as a single diffuse attitude towards the entire political system. This is the understanding of political untrustworthiness as a systemic characteristic that is part of a political culture. Political scientists have argued that the responsiveness and other democratic qualities of a political system are embedded in a particular political culture that fosters trust and trustworthiness, or distrust and untrustworthiness, across all political levels and interactions. Hence, citizens' perceptions of untrustworthiness develop in response to this homogenous political culture. This view also explains the positive association between evaluations of specific institutional actors in a political system, which has been found in survey studies using trust measures for different political agents. We consider this explanation to address the same aspect of the phenomenon of political distrust, but from a different research angle: a

macro-level perspective. It is useful in comparative studies of democratic governance, but limiting in explaining the formation, attribution and operation of political distrust at the individual level.

The aim of this chapter has been to provide a detailed thematic analysis of narrative interview data to uncover the meaning citizens assign to evaluations of political distrust, and the formation and operation of distrusting attitudes. In turn, these empirical insights, in combination with theoretical considerations, have helped to re-conceptualise political distrust and provide a model for further study into the structure and functions of such attitudes. Using qualitative empirical evidence we have been able to access the retrospective and prospective assessments entailed in political distrust and the three evaluative dimensions of technical competence, moral conduct and diverging interest that lead to distrust. Further we have attempted to address some of the theoretical dilemmas and empirical challenges encountered in the study of citizens' political distrust by identifying and explaining the dynamic and relational aspects, as well as the cyclicality and heuristic properties of attitudes of distrust. The conceptual model developed has helped inform an operationalisation and survey measure of political distrust that provide quantitative data to further study these complexities. The following two empirical chapters of this thesis focus on the investigation of survey data based on the conceptual model of political distrust to provide additional evidence on this attitude area.

Chapter 5: The Internal Structure of Political Distrust: New Quantitative Evidence

5.1 New distrust measure: Survey items and description of data
5.2 The internal structure of political distrust I: Dimensions and scaling
5.3 The internal structure of political distrust II: Identifying respondent groups
5.4 Implications for the conceptual model of political distrust
5.5 Discussing about validity and conclusion

The exploratory qualitative empirical analysis of political distrust presented in the preceding chapter guided the conceptual model and survey indicator of citizen distrusting attitudes. These survey items were introduced in an online survey of UK respondents (N=785) supplying original quantitative evidence. This chapter presents and analyses survey responses to the political distrust items, investigates the internal structure of distrusting attitudes and discusses issues of reliability and validity of the new indicator. It explores the way in which the different evaluations of untrustworthiness associate with each other, what underlying response structures form and how respondents are grouped together based on their response patterns. It further discusses the implications of these findings for the conceptual model of distrusting attitudes formulated in this thesis.

We find that the three dimensions of technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations identified through earlier qualitative work capture aspects of political distrust attitudes on a single dimension. Retrospective and prospective assessments of untrustworthy political conduct are also important aspects of distrusting attitudes, and we find that across our sample of respondents prospective evaluations are consistently less negative than retrospective ones, possibly pointing to a positive prospective bias. We also find that evaluations of untrustworthiness are lower for respondents' preferred political parties than for the national parliament. This is more a validation of our research design than a surprising finding of political distrust attitudes. The survey items touching on citizens' assessments of their preferred political party capture the lower boundary of political distrust. Respondents differentiate between evaluative assessments of their preferred parties and questions asking about national parliament along all evaluative dimensions. We also find that for assessments of national parliament extreme negative responses are more frequent than extreme positive

responses, especially regarding considerations of incongruent-interests, which is the easiest assessment for respondents to answer negatively. We believe this further highlights the relevance of examining negative political attitudes and investigating the underlying evaluations of untrustworthy political conduct.

At the same time, our analysis of all evaluative items of national parliament and preferred political party shows they all tap into a single underlying attitude of political distrust. We argue that this reflects a double function of distrusting attitudes: one following a cognitive and affective process where citizens are aware and assess the trustworthiness of specific political agents along the three evaluative dimensions, and another following a heuristic process where overarching distrusting attitudes influence perceptions and assessments of political agents. We conclude this chapter with a discussion on the reliability and validity of the new measures as indicators of political distrust.

5.1 New distrust measure: Survey items and description of data

Employing the insights attained through the empirical work presented in the preceding chapter, we have conceptualised citizen political distrust as a dual process of retrospectively evaluating events and past behaviour, and forming expectations for events and future behaviour along three main lines of evaluation. The survey items focused on respondents' evaluations of their national parliament and their preferred political party. We have already discussed that although attitudes of political distrust can encompass the entire political system, they are most often expressed in specific terms, with reference to particular events and political agents. The national parliament stands out for most citizens as the central institution of representative democracy that embodies the entire elected political class, political processes, symbols and outcomes of democratic governance.[12] For this reason, citizen attitudes towards national parliaments are at the centre of empirical research on trust and distrust. In addition to the institution of national parliament, we wanted to include a subcomponent of the political system towards which citizens could be expected to have the

[12] The different interpretations citizens give when expressing attitudes towards national parliament are discussed in more detail in Section 4 in Chapter 4 and considered again in the later sections of this chapter. We believe that despite the variation of what national parliament stands for, it is still regarded as one of the most visible political institutions (along with the national government) that citizens can evaluate and be oriented towards.

most positive orientations. This would serve not only as a control question for political distrust items, but also provide the basis for an interesting comparison between the evaluations of the two political targets. We therefore ask respondents to evaluate their chosen or preferred political party retrospectively and prospectively along lines of technical competence, ethical conduct and interest congruence. Citizen perceptions of untrustworthy behaviour on behalf of one's preferred party were highlighted during narratives of distrust and appeared to be particularly central to citizens who felt betrayed by the political party they had been supporting. Examining the associations between perceptions of untrustworthiness, the evaluative dimensions for these two subcomponents of the political system and time projections can further help us map the internal structure of distrusting attitudes and supplement the conceptual model of distrust with survey-based evidence.

We formulated three item statements, one for each evaluative process, which varied slightly to contextualise assessment of past events (retrospective) and future expectations (prospective).[13] To capture evaluations of technical ability or incompetence, we asked respondents whether in recent years, they would say that parliament has "usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions". To prompt evaluations of the ethical standing of national parliament we inquired whether it has "usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions". Finally, in order to capture perceptions of diverging and incongruent interests, we asked whether parliament has "usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions". Prospective items follow similar phrasing but prompt respondents to think about future actions; the six items were repeated, this time asking respondents to think of the political party they are most likely to vote for in the next general election. These 12 items guide respondents into thinking explicitly about competencies and characteristics of specified political agents and provide a timeframe (past/future) for each evaluation.

We therefore have three items per time projection, six items for each political object and 12 items in total to capture attitudes of political distrust. We tested the new measures on an online sample recruited by a research institute specialising in online survey research.[14] Table 5.1 below presents the exact phrasing and descriptive statistics for the new items. Each item is measured using a seven-point "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree" Likert scale offering a

[13] The phrasing of the items is very similar in both retrospective and prospective items, and to avoid impressions of repetition and response bias the different sets of items were placed in different parts of the questionnaire.
[14] The research institute maintains an online panel of UK respondents. The survey was completed by 785 individuals, representing a varied sample of the UK population, with average age 47.6 years and 50.4% women.

midpoint category. We have recoded responses so that higher values capture negative assessments and hence, stronger distrust, while lower values capture positive assessments.

Table 5.1: Item phrasing and descriptive statistics

Item Phrasing	Item	Mean	SD
When you think of Parliament as an institution, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?			
In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions	Parliament Technical Retrospective	4.43	1.41
In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions	Parliament Moral Retrospective	4.44	1.50
In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions	Parliament Interest Retrospective	4.69	1.44
When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the competent decision	Parliament Technical Prospective	4.27	1.41
When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the right decision	Parliament Moral Prospective	4.29	1.44
When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences	Parliament Interest Prospective	4.45	1.36
Now, think of the party you would be most likely to vote for in the next general election. Thinking of this party, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?			
In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions	Party Technical Retrospective	3.76	1.35
In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions	Party Moral Retrospective	3.72	1.38
In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions	Party Interest Retrospective	3.74	1.43
When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that this party would be likely to take the competent decision	Party Technical Prospective	3.63	1.33
When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that this party would be likely to take the right decision	Party Moral Prospective	3.57	1.39
When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that this party would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences	Party Interest Prospective	3.57	1.39

Note: Items measured through a seven-point Likert scale (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree), higher values denote higher distrust, N=785.

First we note that, on average, respondents appear to evaluate national parliament significantly more negatively than their preferred political party across all three evaluative dimensions and time projections. Comparing national parliament items to preferred party items along the same dimensions shows that respondents assess their national parliament between 0.64 and 0.95 points more negatively on the seven-point scale ($t=12.78$-18.38, $p<.001$). The differences are bigger in retrospective interest-based (0.88 points) and prospective interest-based (0.95 points) assessments for the two political targets. Furthermore, these differences are statistically significant and hold for gender groups, age and education groups.[15] These differences provide a validation of the research model. Respondents' perceived untrustworthiness of political agents is lower for subcomponents of the political system that citizens 'choose' or 'prefer', both in terms of technical competence and moral standing. The biggest differences emerge in comparisons of interest congruence, mainly because assessments of incongruent interests are more common for national parliament. In other words, respondents in our survey consider the parliament to have performed and to continue to perform poorer than their preferred political party in terms of its technical skills and competence, the morality of their decisions and the degree to which they act in accordance with or against the citizens' best-interest.

These differences are hardly surprising given the political targets evaluated. Interestingly, however, whereas on average, interest-based evaluations of national parliament are more negative than technical and ethical assessments per time projection, the same is not true for evaluations of preferred political party. This is also evident from the item response distributions. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the distributions for each individual item for national parliament and political party, respectively. Whereas responses are distributed differently in the interest-based evaluative items for national parliament (compared to technical and moral items per time projection), preferred party evaluations follow similar distributions. More respondents register distrust of national parliament on the basis that it has not acted in the past and will not act in the future in a manner that is close to their preferences, even if they do not consider parliament to perform incompetently or unethically when presented with

[15] Both male and female respondents register significantly more negative evaluations of national parliament than for their preferred political party. Nevertheless, the two groups do not evaluate these political targets in the same way: men report slightly higher levels of distrust towards national parliament (on average 4.49) than women do (4.36), whereas women register higher levels of distrust towards their preferred political party (3.71) compared to men (3.62).

difficult decisions.[16] On the other hand, the number of respondents who believe the political party they feel closest to has or has not acted in recent years in a manner that is against their best-interest is similar to the number of respondents evaluating their party negatively on technical and ethical grounds. Looking at the distribution of responses for all items in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, we can further note that in the case of attitudes towards national parliament, extreme negative responses are much more frequent than extreme positive responses. Even in the case of attitudes towards citizens' preferred component of the political system, about 10-12% of our sample still registered extreme negative responses. We believe that the pervasiveness of negative evaluations in this context further highlights the need to focus on distrusting, rather than trusting attitudes, when it comes to the relationship between citizens and political agents.

Another readily observable difference among the survey items, both from their mean values and their distributions, is the difference between prospective and retrospective assessments. Respondents consistently register less negative prospective assessments than retrospective ones per evaluative dimension.[17] Although the differences are small (0.13 to 0.24 points on the seven-point scale) and only interest-based evaluations of national parliament show a significant difference ($t=4.58$, $p<.001$), the differences are consistent across demographic groups. For the items referring to national parliament, this change is primarily driven by an increase of mid-scale responses in the prospective from negative evaluations in the retrospective items. The responses at the lower end of the scale denoting the least negative evaluations on technical, normative and interest-based grounds do not alter significantly on average between retrospective and prospective items. For the six items referring to respondents' preferred political party, the differences between retrospective and prospective assessments also hold. Fewer respondents are willing to register a negative prospective assessment for their party and more respondents are willing to formulate positive prospective evaluations. Although the differences are small and it is difficult at this stage to determine precisely why respondents approach prospective items less negatively than retrospective ones across both political targets and evaluative dimensions, we can provide some reasonable hypotheses.

[16] In the majoritarian political system of the UK, we can expect that party support will influence perceptions of parliament based on which party controls a majority. In our sample potential Labour voters (current opposition) evaluate national parliament as much more interest-deviating than Conservative voters (current government, although leading a coalition majority with the Liberal Democratic party).

[17] The phrasing of the items is very similar in both retrospective and prospective items and, to avoid impressions of repetition and response bias the sets of items referring to retrospective and prospective perceptions were placed in different parts of the questionnaire.

Figure 5.1: Distributions of distrust items for national parliament

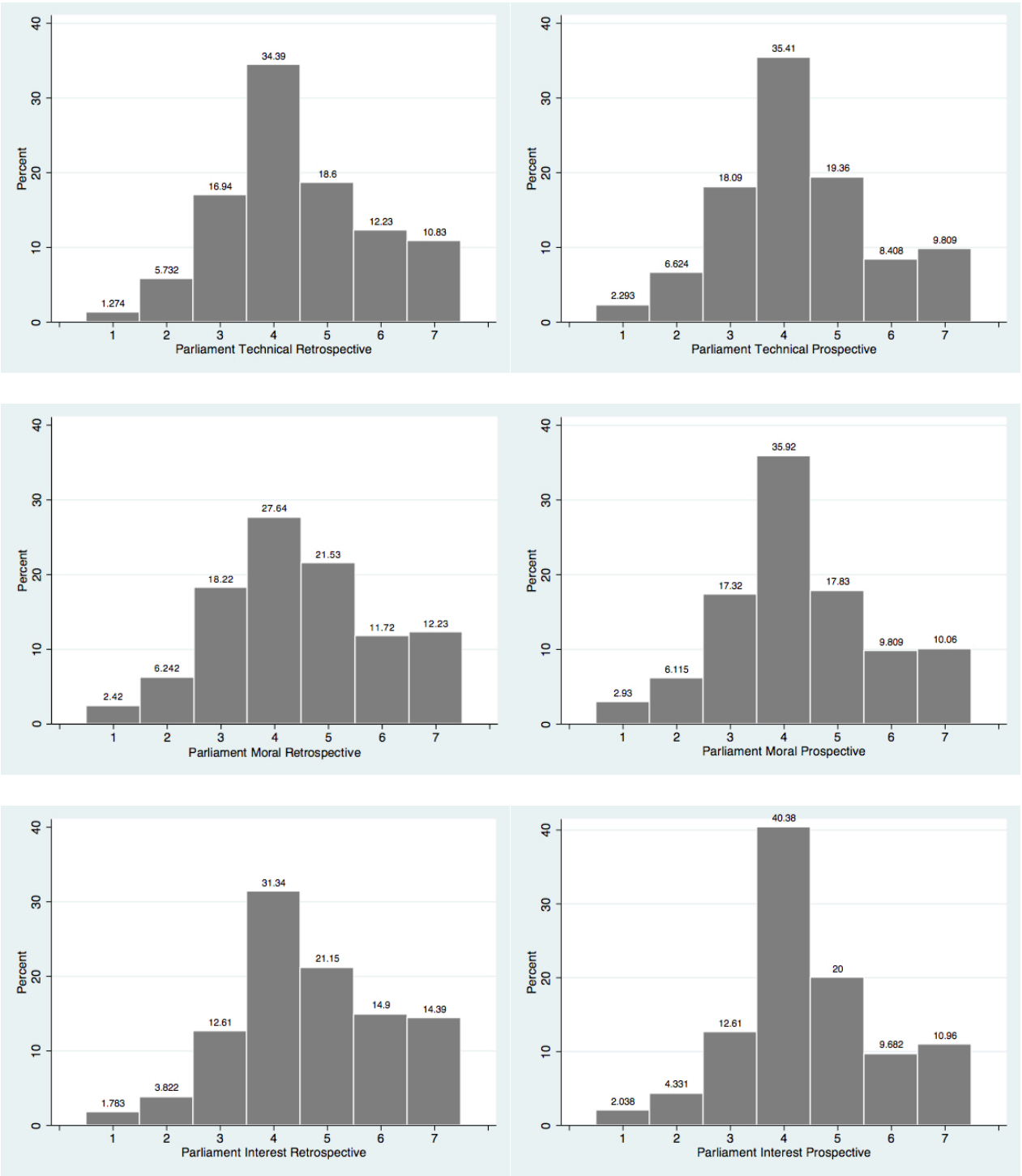
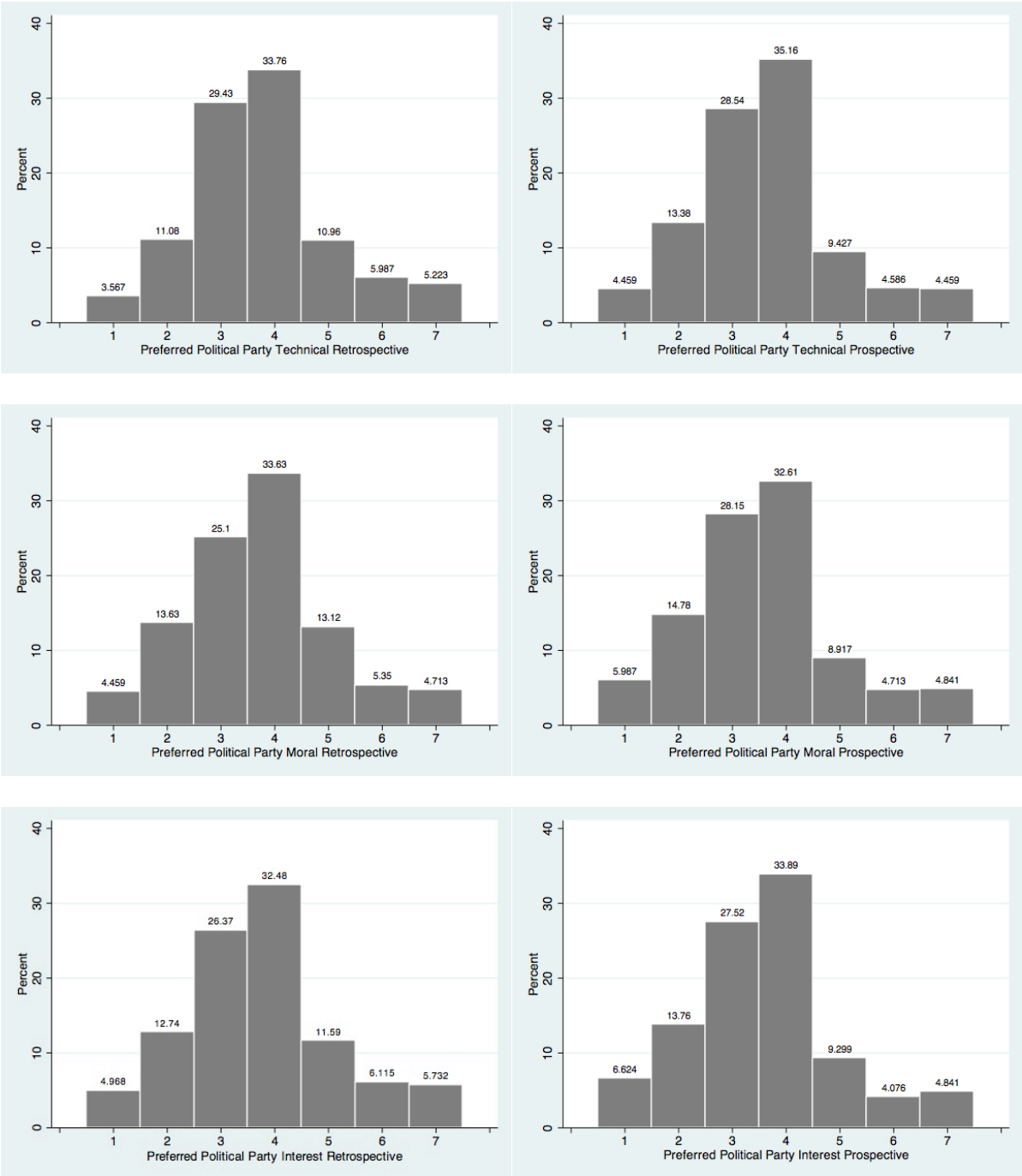


Figure 5.2: Distributions of distrust items for preferred political party



It might be the case that assessing the prospective untrustworthiness of a political agent specifically on dimensions of technical capacity, ethical conduct and interest congruence is more challenging than reviewing past events and would lead more respondents to give a middle-of-the-scale, more uncertain answer. Even in that case however, it does not explain why respondents who have evaluated previous actions of national parliament and their preferred party negatively are ready to give them the benefit of the doubt or even hope for

less untrustworthy behaviour in the future. It seems that though citizens are able to judge the failings of political agents when prompted to evaluate their recent performance, they are also able or willing to maintain overall more favourable expectations for future conduct, in spite of the existing track record. Although conceptually the establishment of distrusting relations depends on the existing evidence of untrustworthiness, this trend suggests there might be other processes at play when it comes to political attitudes of distrust, pushing for a positive prospective bias. Unfortunately, we do not have enough data at our disposal to investigate such processes, but examining retrospective and prospective perceptions of untrustworthy political conduct among different political contexts could provide more evidence and yield interesting results.[18]

We have therefore already noted a number of visible patterns in the data. Respondents evaluate their preferred party less negatively than national parliament across all items, and furthermore, prospective evaluations are on average less negative than retrospective evaluations for both political targets. When respondents are prompted to think specifically in terms of technically complex problems, ethically difficult or socially divisive questions and the actions of political agents, a majority of them arrives at different judgments for past events and future expectations (56-59% for Parliament, 53-55% for preferred political party). These differences, in combination with the overall disparities in the evaluations of the two objects, suggest that respondents are able to come to distinct judgments when weighing the track record and forming expectations of untrustworthiness for two political targets. But how do these evaluations relate to one another? Table 5.2 below presents the associations between the 12 items, showing that they are all positively correlated although the strength of relations varies to a large extent. We can begin to map the structure of distrusting attitudes by taking a closer look at the inter-item correlations.

[18] Between 75-80% of the sampled responses give political targets less negative prospective assessments than retrospective assessments among the three evaluative dimensions. There appears to be no connection between this tendency to formulate more positive future expectations and other demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education or even character traits of political cynicism. We only find that when it comes to evaluations of one's preferred political party this tendency for less negative prospective evaluations does not hold for younger respondents in our sample (aged 18-34 years old). This may be a reflection of the different way in which past evidence of untrustworthiness are evaluated by younger and older citizens when it comes to their chosen party, or the different levels of belief in the party's future actions forged by the longer duration of party support.

Table 5.2: Inter-item correlations

	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp
Parliament Moral Retro	.769*										
Parliament Interest Retro	.760*	.703*									
Parliament Technical Prosp	.613*	.574*	.577*								
Parliament Moral Prosp	.599*	.611*	.564*	.824*							
Parliament Interest Prosp	.537*	.489*	.581*	.756*	.748*						
Party Technical Retro	.489*	.509*	.453*	.402*	.427*	.298*					
Party Moral Retro	.467*	.507*	.425*	.374*	.387*	.254*	.829*				
Party Interest Retro	.430*	.455*	.394*	.377*	.385*	.256*	.803*	.789*			
Party Technical Prosp	.363*	.337*	.315*	.529*	.507*	.424*	.579*	.545*	.554*		
Party Moral Prosp	.341*	.351*	.287*	.484*	.510*	.396*	.588*	.578*	.603*	.862*	
Party Interest Prosp	.297*	.286*	.257*	.423*	.425*	.354*	.523*	.498*	.556*	.826*	.854*

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients. * Correlation is significant at the .05 level.*

From the table above we can see that, firstly, all correlations are positive and statistically significant, and secondly, that items correlate more strongly per time projection and object than per underlying evaluation.[38] Evaluations of technical competence, ethical conduct and interest-congruence are still strongly correlated for each political target across time projections (r >.550). Ethical and technical evaluations also correlate strongly between national parliament and preferred political party per time projection (r >.500), which suggests that respondents are likely to assess past technical incompetence or ethical misconduct of national parliament and preferred party along the same lines.

Table 5.2 shows that the three evaluative dimensions provide some common ground for assessing untrustworthy political conduct retrospectively and prospectively across the two political targets. An interesting observation arises when looking at the way interest-based evaluations of the two institutions relate to each other. In this case, assessments of deviating interests between a citizen and their preferred party are associated more strongly with evaluations of ethical misconduct (and to some extent technical incompetence) of national parliament (r=.455), rather than with interest-based evaluations of national parliament (r=.394). Respectively, evaluations of incongruent interests between the citizen and the national parliament are more strongly associated with technical evaluations of the citizen's preferred party (r=.453), rather than interest-based evaluations (r=.394). This suggests that when a citizen perceives national parliament to be untrustworthy due to past indications of diverging interests and preferences, this perception is more strongly associated with the belief his preferred political party is incompetent; it is more a matter of the technical failures of his preferred party to deliver policies and outcomes in accordance to his preferences, rather than diverging interests between the citizen and his party per se. On the other hand, perceptions of incongruent interests between a citizen and their preferred party are more strongly associated with negative ethical evaluations of national parliament. When a citizen perceives that the subcomponent of the political system, which is closest to his preference and which he has chosen to support, fails to protect his best-interest, he is more likely to believe the entire political system and its leading institution is problematic and unfair. This association was particularly evident in interviews of participants who expressed distrust in the system both in terms of their party going against their political preferences, such as Labour supporters feeling betrayed over the Iraq war and Tony Blair's leadership, and in terms of their

[38] Given the fact that the three evaluative items per object and time projection are part of the same question sequence, the higher correlations among each sequence are not too surprising.

parliament following policy decisions they perceived to be morally wrong. Even across the three national contexts studied, we found that the inability to identify a politician or political group that will promote and safeguard one's best-interest as a citizen was often interpreted as a sign of a lacking political system that cannot fulfil accepted democratic norms.

Nevertheless, all perceptions of untrustworthy political conduct run in a similar direction and hence, more negative perceptions along, say ethical considerations of one part of the political system, go hand in hand with negative perceptions along other evaluative lines or other parts of the political system. The very strong correlations between moral and technical evaluations for preferred political party, as well as national parliament, raise the question of whether respondents really distinguish between these two types of evaluative dimensions. Looking at all responses, 60.4% of the sample gave the same answer on the 1-7 scale for technical and ethical retrospective evaluations of national parliament, while 39.6% opt for different responses. For prospective evaluation, 67% of the sample picked the same response for the two evaluative items. Similar technical and ethical assessments of preferred political party reach 72.5 % and 74.5% of the sample for retrospective and prospective items, respectively. It seems therefore that for both political targets, and even more so for one's chosen political party, the separation between normatively unacceptable behaviour and technical incompetence is hard to achieve – especially when this is thought of in abstract terms of future expectations, rather than grounded in past experiences citizens can recall. From exploratory interviews we noted that oftentimes political distrust is expressed in terms of perceived incompetence and unfair conduct of a political agent that are hard to disentangle. Many of the political tribulations that are known to generate distrust, such as corruption and political scandals, harm the ability of a system both to produce successful outputs and to function in accordance with acceptable norms of conduct. Even though the two aspects are analytically separate, they are often intertwined in practice and in political reality.

Overall, we find that half of the sampled respondents opted for a combination of responses among the three items asked per time projection for national parliament evaluations, and about a third opted for a combination of evaluations of preferred political party. Also, looking back at the item response distributions in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 we see that certain items tend to have a high percentage of middle-category answers. Examining all the items together we find that most respondents chose a combination of responses, rather than opting for the middle category for all the distrust questions. For the items evaluating national parliament, only 56 respondents chose the middle category throughout the six items (7.1% of the sample), while

for the items referring to one's preferred political party 97 respondents opted for the midpoint (12.4% of the sample). Looking at the 12 items together, only 41 respondents opted for the middle category throughout (5.2% of the sample). If we take the scale mid-point as an indecisive state,[39] it is somewhat surprising that more respondents appear to be indecisive about the political untrustworthiness of their preferred political party than the national parliament, given that information and pre-existing evaluations should be more readily available for the former political object rather than the more removed institutional level of parliament.

This section has presented a brief overview of the new survey items and the way in which responses are related to each other. We already noted some obvious similarities and differences in the ways these 12 items were answered, such as less negative evaluations of the preferred subcomponent of the political system than of national parliament, especially in considerations of incongruent interests. We also saw that perceptions of untrustworthiness correlate positively among different items; some are more strongly associated than others, and these associations are in line with our conceptual model of distrusting attitudes and earlier empirical findings. In the following section, we proceed with a more systematic analysis of response patterns in order to determine the underlying structure of distrusting attitudes as captured through this data.

5.2 The internal structure of political distrust I: Dimensions and scaling

In line with the conceptual model of political distrust advanced throughout the thesis, we have argued that citizen perceptions of untrustworthiness entail retrospective and prospective assessments of technical failure, unethical political conduct and incongruent interests between the citizen and political agents. The focus of the next few paragraphs is to explore

[39] Thinking of the middle category of the seven-point scale as a 'neutral' evaluation and a reflection of 'neither trust nor distrust' is tempting given the items are measured through a Likert scale that provides a range of positive to negative responses. Nevertheless, such an interpretation would assume the items measure trust and distrust perfectly and in complete symmetry, which is far from a claim that we can or wish to make in this study. There is a large body of literature on the meaning and implications of the middle response category in survey research (see Zaller, 1992 or Schaeffer and Presser, 2003) and we have also found through additional analysis that we can distinguish a respondent group that opts for the middle category throughout all distrust items on the basis of demographic characteristics and political variables. We discuss this point further in the concluding section of this chapter and the final chapter of the thesis.

how these evaluations relate to each other to map the internal structure of distrust and whether they are all measures of a single underlying latent attitude or they tap into different dimensions.

This analysis offers two substantive contributions for our research of political distrust. Firstly, exploring how the different evaluations map out using multivariate statistical analysis supplements our understanding of distrusting attitudes that has so far been based on conceptual work and qualitative exploration. Empirically, does each evaluation capture a distinct attitude or do they represent integral parts of the same latent orientation towards the political system, as hypothesised? Similarly, are retrospective and prospective evaluations part of the same judgment of political untrustworthiness, or different underlying components that could be better described in other terms? And finally, what about assessments of distinct political targets, especially if one of them represents the part of the political system citizens are expected to be most sympathetic towards? We have already considered the bivariate correlations between individual items, commented on stronger and weaker associations and the evaluations that stand out. Given the differences between evaluative dimensions and time projections it is also possible that perceptions of political untrustworthiness follow a hierarchical pattern, with certain negative assessments capturing more or less political distrust of the political system than others. Further analysis can illuminate the structure of these associations and help interpret earlier observations.

The second contribution concerns the researchers' claim of measuring attitudes of political distrust through these survey items. The claim implies that we can add the different assessments of political untrustworthiness in some way and provide a reliable and one-dimensional scale of political distrust. We leave the discussion on the validity of the new indicator for a later section of this chapter. For the time being, we would like to determine how different evaluations fit together, whether we can consider the items as manifest variables of a single latent attitude of political distrust, and explore the dimensionality of such an attitude.

Since we are interested in the underlying structure and dimensions present in our data we employ an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) method. As explained in Chapter 3, our aim is not data reduction, but the exploration of the manifest items' correlation structure, which can allow us to link them to the unobservable latent variable of interest based on a probability model (Bartholomew et al., 2008). EFA gives us the opportunity to investigate which and

how many underlying latent factors cause the items to covary. We use maximum likelihood estimation for the factor extraction, as this estimation procedure allows for the calculation of goodness of fit indicators and the exploration of the internal structure of the data in two dimensional space using factor rotation (Fabrigar et al., 1999).

Model 1 in Table 5.3 below shows a one-factor solution for the 12 manifest items. A single factor explains almost 56% of total variance between the items, which suggests the presence of an underlying latent variable across all evaluations of political untrustworthiness. Evaluations of one's preferred political party load higher on this single factor model than evaluations of national parliament. For both political targets retrospective evaluations have lower loadings than prospective evaluations and interest-based assessments have lower loadings than technical and ethical assessments. Yet the total variance explained by the one-factor model is only a little over half of the total variance between the items, and our analysis suggests there is another factor worth considering in explaining the internal structure of the data (there are two factors with an Eigenvalue larger than 1).

Table 5.3: Factor analysis of 12 political distrust items

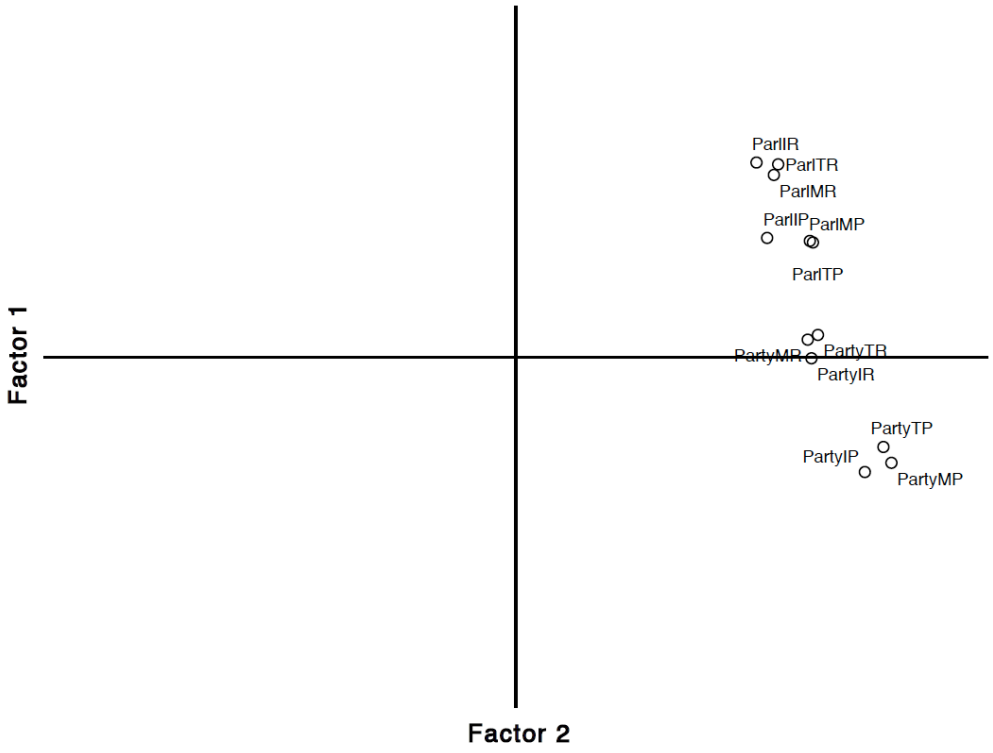
	Model I	Model II	
	Factor 1	Factor 1	Factor 2
Parliament Technical Retrospective	0.680	0.617	0.611
Parliament Moral Retrospective	0.676	0.606	0.578
Parliament Interest Retrospective	0.634	0.564	0.617
Parliament Technical Prospective	0.722	0.690	0.369
Parliament Moral Prospective	0.730	0.697	0.365
Parliament Interest Prospective	0.616	0.587	0.381
Party Technical Retrospective	0.770	0.712	0.069
Party Moral Retrospective	0.743	0.686	0.059
Party Interest Retrospective	0.739	0.695	-0.017
Party Technical Prospective	0.774	0.866	-0.285
Party Moral Prospective	0.778	0.885	-0.335
Party Interest Prospective	0.713	0.821	-0.364
Eigenvalue	6.68	6.68	1.93
Variance Explained	55.68%	55.68%	16.09%
AIC	3900	1870	
BIC	3956	1977	
LR Test	χ^2=1809, p<.000	χ^2=3848, p<.000	

Note: Entries are factor loadings from Exploratory Factor Analysis using Maximum Likelihood estimation for factor extraction

Model 2 in the table above presents the results of a two-factor solution. The cumulative variance explained by the two factors is now 72% and while all items still load strongly on the first factor, the second factor distinguishes between assessments of untrustworthiness of national parliament (loading highly and positively) and of preferred political party (loading negatively or close to zero). None of the two models is statistically significant, but the AIC and BIC selection criteria values are reduced by more than half, denoting a much better fit for Model II to the data.[40] The AIC and BIC criteria for model selection are not without their critics, and have been shown to point to the selection of more complex models as sample sizes increase (Kim and Cameron, 2011; Mulaik, 2001; Preacher et al., 2013). Nevertheless, strictly following these criteria would lead us to conclude the two-factor model better fits our data. Using a two-factor model we can also present item loadings on two-dimensional space. In Figure 5.3 below we can see that the second factor splits the items based on the political agent they are referring to; though there are also some differences based on the time projection of each evaluation, prospective evaluations of the preferred party have negative loadings on this second factor. The plot shows that all evaluations tap strongly into one latent attitude, with some small variation (factor 1).

[40] The two-factor model is not statistically significant either, meaning that the covariance matrix reproduced based on the two factors extracted is statistically significantly different from the observed matrix in the data. To achieve a reproduced matrix that is not significantly different from the one observed we need to extract 6-7 factors, although the process of interpreting these factors in a meaningful way, even when allowing for rotation, becomes challenging. Allowing for an oblique factor rotation, they can be loosely interpreted as (i) three items of prospective evaluations for parliament, (ii) three items of prospective evaluations for preferred political party, (iii) three items of retrospective evaluations for parliament, (iv) three items of retrospective evaluations for preferred political party, (v) prospective technical evaluation for parliament and preferred political party, (vi) prospective and retrospective evaluations of interest-congruence for parliament (as opposed to moral). The fifth and sixth factors with the item loadings indicate that firstly, evaluations of technical competence are similar and secondly, that there might be tension between evaluating a representative political object such as the national parliament in interest-congruence terms.

Figure 5.3: Factor loading plot for two-factor solution without rotation



Factor rotation in EFA can help the process of visualising the distinction and interpreting what the two different underlying factors discovered in the data stand for. Table 5.3.1 below shows the results for an orthogonal and an oblique factor rotation for our data.[41] The orthogonal rotation allows the two axes to move, but forces them to remain perpendicular to each other, meaning that the two factors are not allowed to correlate. In this case we can see that evaluations of untrustworthiness of the national parliament load highly on the first factor and evaluations of preferred political party on the latter, yet at the same time all evaluative items still load on both factors. Retrospective assessments of preferred party actually load considerably on both dimensions. Therefore, it would be difficult to argue for the presence of two distinct dimensions based on the political target being evaluated. Model IV presents the factor loadings following an oblique rotation, where the two factors are allowed to correlate freely with each other. With the two factors correlated positively r=.531, interpreting the two underlying dimensions based on assessments of the two political targets becomes easier.

[41] For orthogonal factor rotation we used Varimax rotation, a method that maximises the squared variance within factors. It is the most widely used orthogonal rotation method in the social sciences (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Oblique rotation was carried out using the Oblimin method. As a robustness check we tried other rotation methods both for orthogonal and oblique factor rotation and all yielded similar results as these presented above.

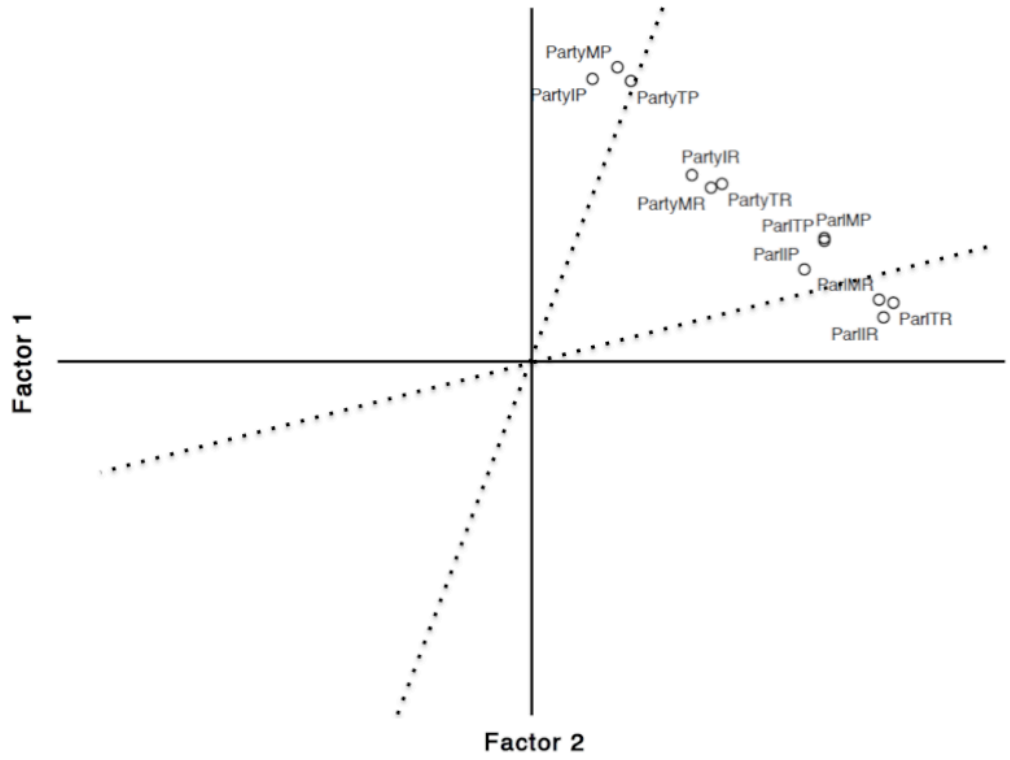
Figure 5.3.1 below also shows the loading plot for the rotated two-factor model, the dashed lines representing the two factors following an oblique rotation.

Table 5.3.1: Two factor rotated models for 12 political distrust items

	Model III: Orthogonal Rotation		Model IV: Oblique Rotation	
	Factor 1 Parliament	Factor 2 Party	Factor 1 Parliament	Factor 2 Party
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.849	.186	.907	-.077
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.815	.195	.866	-.054
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.826	.140	.896	-.121
Parliament Technical Prospective	.686	.380	.661	.198
Parliament Moral Prospective	.686	.389	.658	.208
Parliament Interest Prospective	.639	.291	.636	.113
Party Technical Retrospective	.447	.558	.333	.481
Party Moral Retrospective	.421	.546	.307	.476
Party Interest Retrospective	.377	.586	.244	.536
Party Technical Prospective	.233	.881	-.012	.918
Party Moral Prospective	.202	.924	-.062	.978
Party Interest Prospective	.143	.888	-.117	.956
Factor correlation coefficient	-		.531	

Note: Entries are rotated factor loadings, using maximum likelihood extraction method. Model III: Varimax method for orthogonal rotation. Model IV: Direct Oblimin method for oblique rotation.

Figure 5.3.1 Factor loading plot for two-factor solution with orthogonal and oblique rotations



Note: Loadings on continuous axes calculated using Varimax orthogonal rotation. Loadings on dashed axes calculated using Direct Oblimin oblique rotation, factors correlate at r=.531

What does this analysis suggest for the structure of political distrust attitudes? Firstly, that there is indeed an underlying latent factor that causes the different evaluative items to covary, which we claim is the respondents' overall attitude of political distrust. All items capturing perceptions of untrustworthiness load highly on that factor. Carrying out the same analysis for the items referring to each political object separately shows that one underlying factor explains 70.6% of variance among evaluations of parliament and 72.2% of variance among evaluations of political party (Tables 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 in Appendix H). Therefore, we can claim that the three evaluative dimensions and two time projections are all part of a single underlying attitude, as conceptualised by the model of political distrust. The existence of a second dimension in our analysis points to an underlying factor that differentiates evaluations of untrustworthiness based on whether they are formed in respect to one's preferred political party or to the national parliament (and to a much lesser extent regarding time projections). Given the conceptual difference between these two subcomponents of the political system

and the variation within our data, considering two underlying dimensions does not alter our substantive interpretation of this analysis. The two-factor model provides a better fit to the data, yet the place of the 12 items in two-dimensional space shows that if we claim there are two factors explaining perceptions of untrustworthiness according to each political object, these are positively and strongly correlated with one another. The differences among the specific types of evaluation (technical, ethical and particularly interest-based), as well as retrospective and prospective assessments, can also be seen through this analysis, but overall the 12 manifest items can be taken to capture a single underlying political attitude.

We further test the scalability of the new items for measuring a unified concept through reliability analysis. A scale comprised of all 12 evaluative items appears to be highly reliable, scoring a reliability coefficient much higher than the accepted threshold value of .8 that denotes high reliability (Chronbach's a=.927). All items are highly correlated to the single scale, with prospective moral assessment of national parliament showing the strongest association. Furthermore, all items contribute to the reliability of the scale; even removing interest-based assessments of parliament, which has proven to be a difficult evaluative dimension, would still decrease total overall reliability. We can therefore claim that putting all these evaluative items together in a single index provides a reliable scale measuring a unified variable. The same analysis conducted for two separate scales for each political component, distrust of national parliament and distrust of preferred party items, also results in highly reliable scales (Chronbach's a=.916 and a=.923 respectively, see Tables 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 in Appendix H).

Table 5.4: Reliability analysis for 12 items

Items	Item-scale correlation	Alpha, if item deleted
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.751	.920
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.744	.921
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.712	.922
Parliament Technical Prospective	.778	.919
Parliament Moral Prospective	.785	.919
Parliament Interest Prospective	.683	.923
Party Technical Retrospective	.770	.919
Party Moral Retrospective	.743	.920
Party Interest Retrospective	.738	.921
Party Technical Prospective	.761	.920
Party Moral Prospective	.763	.920
Party Interest Prospective	.700	.922
Scale Chronbach's a coefficient = .927		

Being able to create a unified scale with the 12 evaluative items is useful for subsequent analyses of political distrust attitudes. Nevertheless, we have seen that there are obvious differences among items of specific evaluative dimensions and time projections. Retrospective and prospective assessments of untrustworthy political conduct differ both in their mean values and the way they load on underlying factors. Furthermore, the items capturing interest-based assessments of national parliament lead to more negative perceptions and correlate lower with the underlying attitude of political distrust than any other evaluative dimension. These differences suggest that there might be an ordered structure to the evaluations capturing distrusting attitudes.

We used Mokken analysis to explore the internal hierarchical structures between the responses to the 12 items capturing perceptions of political untrustworthiness. Mokken scale analysis is an Item Response Theory (IRT) based model and follows the IRT scale assumptions of unidimensionality, monotonicity and local independence. It provides a more demanding scaling test than Classic Test Theory (CTT) models, such as reliability and factor analysis presented above. More relevant for our purposes, Mokken analysis takes into account the relative 'popularity' or 'unpopularity' of items within a scale and can investigate hierarchies within data structures. Using Mokken analysis we can determine whether some items are harder to agree with than others in a consistent pattern across all respondents, which would denote a cumulative aspect in the way they measure political distrust. Would it make sense to think of the 12 evaluative items measuring political distrust similar to the way, say an algebra test measures the latent trait of mathematical knowledge? For example, an item asking for a multiplication result is 'easier' than an item asking for polynomial factorisation, and we can reasonably expect that someone who is able to answer the second question correctly will be able to answer the first correctly as well. We can think of mathematical knowledge as a latent trait that follows 'steps', so that being able to 'agree with' or 'correctly answer' the item at one step means you can also 'agree with' or 'correctly answer' the items on all of the steps below, since they are easier and denote a smaller amount of the latent variable.

Do attitudes of political distrust measured through assessments of retrospective and prospective technical incompetence, unethical conduct and diverging interests follow an ordinal step-like structure? Perhaps a time projection or a particular evaluation could be

'harder' to agree with, and such negative evaluations would denote more of the latent variable of political distrust than others. In citizen narratives of political distrust it was clear that participants placed more emphasis on certain evaluations than on others to explain their decision to distrust political targets. For some, it was assessments of incongruent interests in the future that motivate distrust, while for others retrospective assessments of unethical and unjust conduct. Through Mokken analysis we can determine whether differences among the responses for different items are driven by a hierarchy of 'easier' and 'harder' evaluations (denoting 'less' or 'more' of the latent distrusting attitude), which is consistent among all respondents. Further, it is also possible that different evaluations are more central in perceptions of political untrustworthiness for different political objects. For example, looking at item mean scores, we have seen that although registering a negative interest-based evaluation of national parliament is more common among respondents, negative interest-based evaluations of one's preferred political party (at least prospective ones) are the least common. Since we have items referring to two political targets, we can also check for hierarchies within distrusting attitudes towards national parliament and towards one's preferred political party separately and compare our findings.

Tables 5.5 and 5.5.1 below present the results of a Mokken analysis for the items capturing evaluations of national parliament and evaluations of preferred political party, respectively. Firstly, we can see that the items can be grouped in indices measuring distrusting attitudes towards the two objects that show strong scalability. For the items referring to national parliament, the scale Loevinger's coefficient is H=.674 and each item has a strong individual coefficient, between Hi=.646-.693. Similarly, distrust of preferred party items form a good scale, with a Loevinger's coefficient H=.685, and Hi for each individual item between Hi=.666-.717. These values far exceed Mokken's suggestions for the threshold value of a medium-strength scale (H=.400) and the threshold value for a strong scale (H=.500).[42] Hence, there is strong evidence that the two scales measure unidimensional latent traits (distrust of national parliament and distrust of preferred party) and that a higher overall score in the scale would denote a larger amount of distrust.[43] Looking at the non-intersection criteria, which can provide evidence on whether respondents order their levels of agreement/disagreement with the items in a similar manner and hence create a hierarchical

[42] We use the following guidelines for interpreting scalability coefficients from Mokken (1971): H < 0.30: no scale; .30 < H < .40: weak scale; .40 < H < .50: medium scale; .50 < H: strong scale.
[43] To test the Monotone Homogeneity (MH) model we look at the Homogeneity criteria. Values under 40 are considered acceptable for the homogeneity model and in our analyses all item criteria fall below this value.

pattern in the data, we find some evidence in favour of an ordered item structure in the case of distrust of national parliament and some, although much weaker, for distrust of preferred political party.[44] The ordering that is evident from the analysis suggests that in the case of parliament, items measuring interest congruence in both time projections are the 'easiest' items, which are able to capture less distrust, while prospective assessments of unjust practices and technical incompetence are harder to agree with. Moreover, items touching on retrospective evaluations are easier to answer denoting distrust than items touching on prospective evaluations, and this holds both for preferred party and parliament items.

Table 5.5: Mokken scale analysis for distrust of parliament items

	Item Hi	Homogeneity Criteria	Non-intersection Criteria
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.682	24	71
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.655	20	52
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.674	-9	0
Parliament Technical Prospective	.693	23	38
Parliament Moral Prospective	.691	2	59
Parliament Interest Prospective	.646	0	52
Scale	H= .674 (.541)		

Note: Scale Loevinger's coefficient H (st.error in parenthesis) and item Hi calculated in R programme using Mokken package. N=785

Table 5.5.1: Mokken scale analysis for distrust of preferred party items

	Item Hi	Homogeneity Criteria	Non-intersection Criteria
Party Technical Retrospective	.685	-8	83
Party Moral Retrospective	.666	0	91
Party Interest Retrospective	.680	0	70
Party Technical Prospective	.691	-3	85
Party Moral Prospective	.717	0	80
Party Interest Prospective	.670	26	77
Scale	H= .685 (.021)		

Note: Scale Loevinger's coefficient H (st.error in parenthesis) and item Hi calculated in R programme using Mokken package. N=785

[44] According to Hardouin et al. (2011) strong evidence for non-intersecting item step response functions are provided with criteria values below 40, while values between 40 and 80 are acceptable. An investigation of the non-intersection criteria for the parliament scale shows it is borderline with all of the criteria values being below 80, although the majority of items fall between 40 and 80. For distrust in preferred political party we find there is mixed evidence, and weaker than in the case of items referring to parliament, with three of the item criteria with values of 80 and below and the remaining three above 80.

In other words, the evaluations used to capture attitudes of political distrust in our survey show that perceptions of untrustworthiness for national parliament are ordered in a similar way among the respondents. Both retrospective and prospective assessments of diverging interests make it easier for respondents to express negative attitudes, while prospective moral and technical negative assessments capture more distrusting attitudes than other items. There is some evidence, although much weaker, that preferred party evaluations may also be ordered. Perceptions of political party untrustworthiness are ordered on the basis of prospective and retrospective assessments, with negative evaluations of future incompetent and unethical conduct capturing more distrust than retrospective negative evaluations.

Performing the same analysis for the 12 items together, the results in Table 5.5.2 below show that the evaluative items can be grouped together to form a strong scale measuring attitudes of political distrust. The scale's Loevinger's coefficient H=.541 and individual item Hi coefficients are all strong, between Hi=.49-.58. Further, all evaluative items tap into a unidimensional latent trait and political distrust; respondents scoring higher values on the aggregate scale express higher levels of political distrust (the monotonicity assumption criteria are satisfied).[45] However, we do not find any evidence that respondents rank the 12 items in a similar way to justify a hierarchical structure. The assumption of non-intersecting item step response functions is violated, and all of the criteria are substantially above the conventional threshold value of 80.[46] Nevertheless, there is evidence that the 12 items can be considered a good measure of political distrust and that the three fundamental assumptions of Mokken Scaling and IRT are verified.

Table 5.5.2: Mokken scale analysis of 12 political distrust items

	Item Hi	Homogeneity Criteria	Non-intersection Criteria
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.546	8	241
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.539	80	236
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.518	13	278
Parliament Technical Prospective	.571	-2	235
Parliament Moral Prospective	.575	0	239
Parliament Interest Prospective	.492	29	255
Party Technical Retrospective	.564	15	233

[45] The Monotone Homogeneity (MH) model is satisfied since all items' homogeneity criteria fall below the value of 40.

[46] Investigating the assumption of non-intersecting item step response functions using the P-matrix we can see curves intersect. This means that the order in which items are ranked by respondents is not the same across all respondents.

Party Moral Retrospective	.539	15	241
Party Interest Retrospective	.532	14	238
Party Technical Prospective	.558	17	260
Party Moral Prospective	.555	13	291
Party Interest Prospective	.504	31	278
12 Item Scale	H= .541 (.021)		

Note: Scale Loevinger's coefficient H (st.error in parenthesis) and item Hi calculated in R programme using Mokken package. N=785

Although we have commented on the differences in the average levels of negative evaluations registered for the two different subcomponents of the political system, there is no overall pattern or clear hierarchy in the way all respondents approach the 12 evaluative items. In the following section we will investigate the structure of the data from another viewpoint, that of respondents themselves, to check whether clearer patterns emerge. Until now, we have provided a series of analyses for the 12 questions tapping into assessments of political untrustworthiness. These analyses suggest the 12 items are measuring a single latent attitude, of political distrust, and can be used together to form a reliable and unidimensional scale. At the same time, the presence of a second smaller element that differentiates evaluations of national parliament from evaluations of one's preferred political party indicates that the political target being evaluated is also an important aspect to take into consideration when analysing attitudes of political distrust. Speaking of two distinct attitudes, such as distrust of national parliament and distrust of one's preferred party, would not be entirely correct since the two are highly correlated and dependent on a single latent attitude of political distrust. Nevertheless, for the purposes of investigating distrusting attitudes further, evaluations that tap into perceptions of untrustworthiness for these two parts of the political system can be considered separately. They create reliable and strong scales and further, showed some evidence of hierarchical ordering in the way respondents consider each evaluative dimension and time projection.

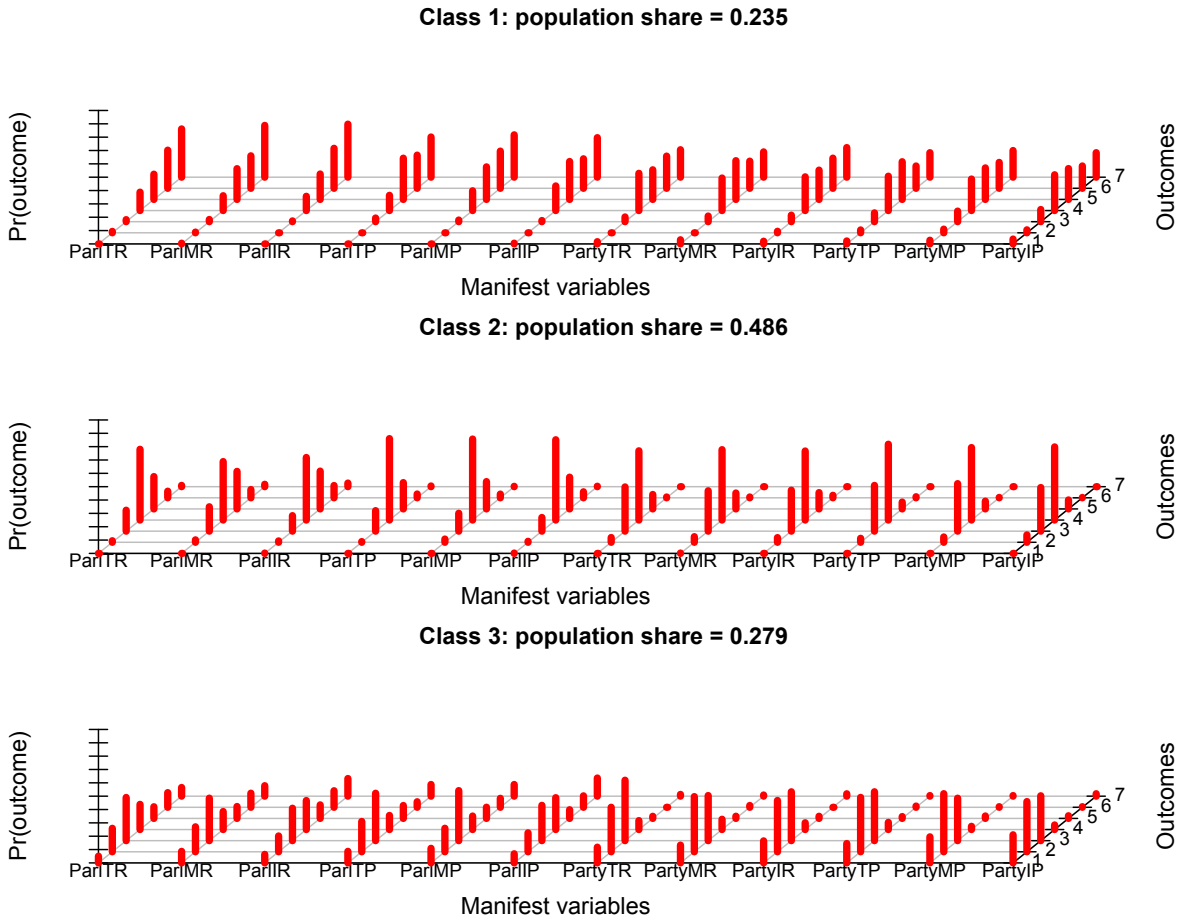
5.3 The internal structure of political distrust II: Identifying respondent groups

We have already investigated the perceptions of political untrustworthiness as these are captured through the 12 evaluative items employed in our survey. In this section, the aim is to explore patterns from the viewpoint of respondents; that is, how respondents choose to approach the items in the survey. Latent Class Analysis is a respondent-centred method and aims to identify and characterise classes of similar response patterns. In other words, LCA identifies substantively meaningful groups of respondents based on the way they answer different evaluative items.[47] This analysis can show whether more negative evaluations along certain items are consistently paired with less negative evaluations along other items by a subgroup of respondents. We have already noted that some of the associations between evaluative items are weaker than others. It is possible to think of such cases: for example citizens who support an anti-systemic or extreme political party are likely to perceive national parliament as pursuing policies that go against the citizens' best-interest and at the same time to perceive their preferred party as protecting their interests.

We chose LCA as an exploratory tool to identify patterns of responses and we investigate all evaluative items together as well as separately depending on the part of the political system they refer to. The latent class model estimates class-conditional response probabilities and provides information criteria to judge which number of classes in a model provides the best fit to the data. Using LCA as an exploratory method requires us to start from a complete independence model (with one class) and then start increasing the number of classes. In the study of the 12 items, the LCA yields interesting and meaningful results from the three-class model onwards. A three-class model is presented in Figure 5.4 and identifies the following three groups: respondents who record high levels of distrust across all 12 items (23% of sample), those who have higher probability of selecting medium values across all items (49% of sample), and those who register the least negative evaluations (28% of sample). We can clearly see that the basis for the creation of groups is not a difference in item preferences, but on the range of evaluations recorded across all items uniformly.

Figure 5.4: Latent class analysis using a three-class model for all items

[47] For a longer discussion on the usefulness and choice of Latent Class Analysis, please see Chapter 3.4. Examples of latent class models in political science include McCutcheon (1985), Feick (1989), Breen (2000), Hill (2001), Hill and Kriesi (2001), Blaydes and Linzer (2006), Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers (2004), and Hagenaars and McCutcheon (2002).

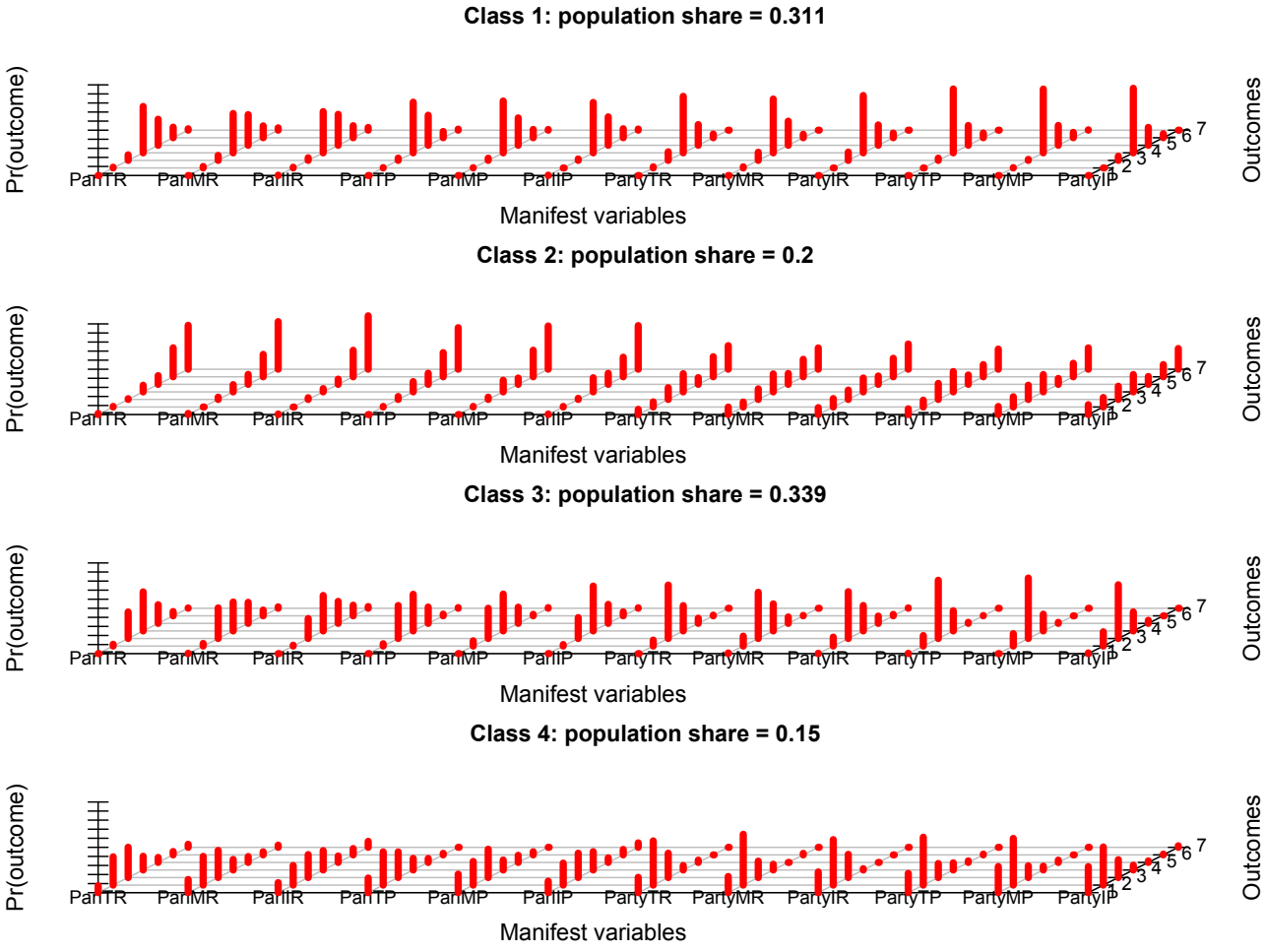


Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package. Length of each bar denotes the probability members in this class will pick the specified response from the 1-7 measurement scale. The probability scale is situated on the left, the seven-point response scale is on the right hand-side of each figure.

Nevertheless, these three groups show variations in the response patterns of certain items. We can easily see that within the group characterised by higher probability of expressing extremely negative assessments on a technical, ethical and interest basis, evaluations of national parliament are more likely to be extremely negative than evaluations of preferred political party. In fact, calculating a four-class model captures this difference in the way respondents approach the items evaluating national parliament and preferred party. Respondents give more favourable evaluations to their preferred political party than to national parliament and the probability of registering complete distrust is lower (Class 2 in Figure 5.4.1). A model identifying five latent classes brings out clearer differences in the patterns of responses. Presented in Figure 5.4.2, this model identifies the group of respondents who overwhelmingly opt for the scale midpoint across all 12 items (Class 1, 18% of sample). The second class groups together completely distrusting respondents (Class 2,

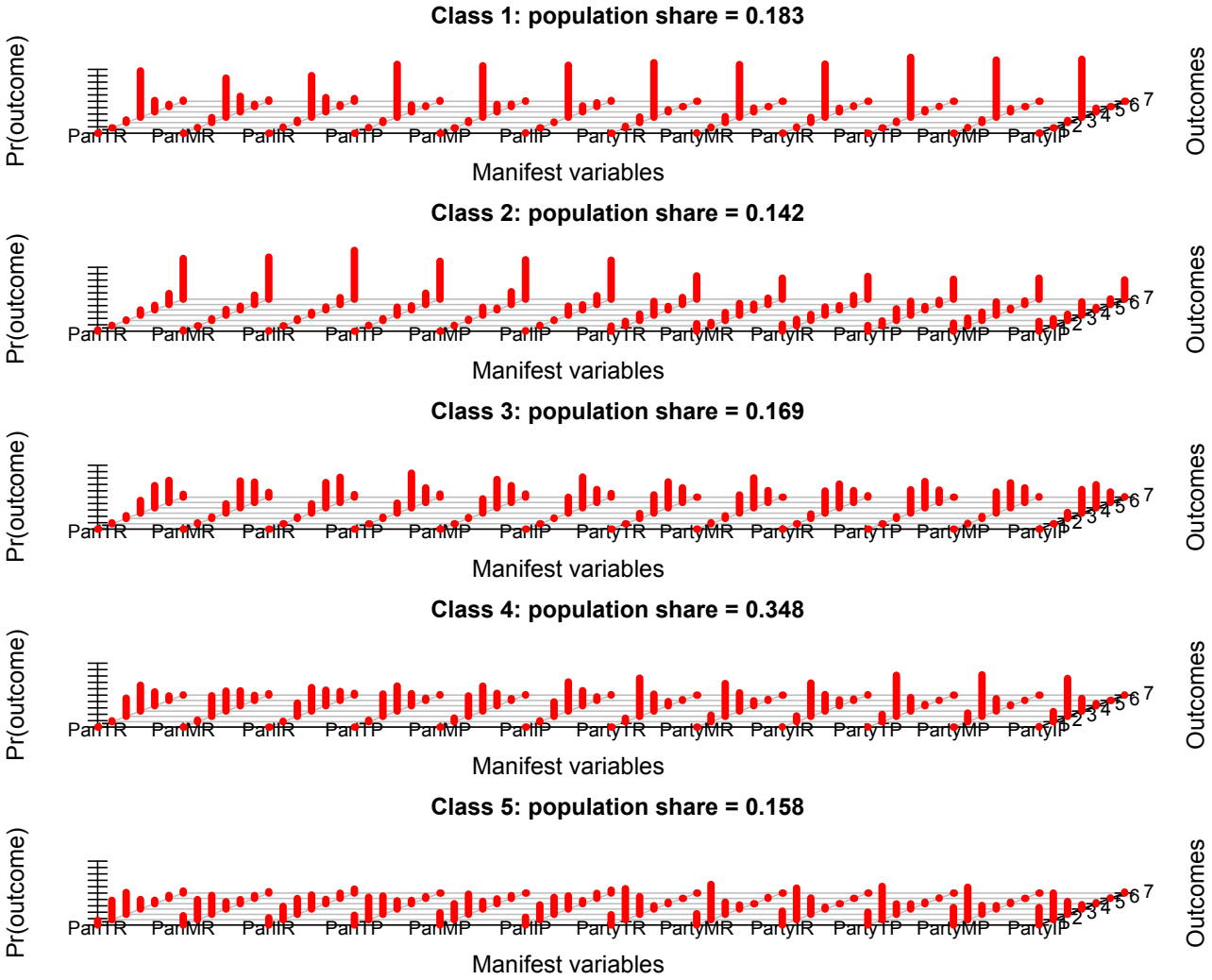
14% of sample), yet once more, the probability of registering complete distrust of parliament is higher than distrust of one's political party. The third class identifies a group of distrusting, but not extremely, respondents (17% of sample), while the fourth groups together responses of average and lower distrusting (35% of sample). Finally, the fifth class groups respondents that evaluate their political party and national parliament positively along items, although the probability of such evaluations for the parliament items is lower than that for one's political party.

Figure 5.4.1: Latent class analysis using a four-class model for all items



Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package. Length of each bar denotes the probability members in this class will pick the specified response from the 1-7 measurement scale. The probability scale is situated on the left, the seven-point response scale is on the right hand-side of each figure.

Figure 5.4.2: Latent class analysis using a five-class model for all items



Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package. Length of each bar denotes the probability members in this class will pick the specified response from the 1-7 measurement scale. The probability scale is situated on the left, the seven-point response scale is on the right hand-side of each figure.

Even with the calculation of more latent response groups, our data still do not show response patterns assessing untrustworthy conduct along specific evaluative dimensions or political targets. Although there is some variation in the probability of a certain response category depending on whether the item taps into evaluations of national parliament or preferred party, classes of respondents are identified according to overall levels of political distrust (the range of negative evaluations across all items).

Identifying respondent groups based on their response patterns on the latent variable under investigation is already an informative exercise. If we would like to decide the optimal number of classes to describe this data, comparing the three, four and five-class models based

on model fit, the information criteria and percentage change in the likelihood chi-squared statistic compared to the one-class model, all point to the five-class model as the most parsimonious. Recent simulation tests on LCM selection criteria show that the BIC performs better than other information criteria in determining the number of classes in latent class modelling and in our data the five-class model scores the lowest values of BIC (Nylund et al., 2007).

Table 5.6: Latent class analysis model selection criteria

	3 Class Model	4 Class Model	5 Class Model	6 Class Model
AIC	27331	26360	25641	25405
BIC	28349	27719	27341	27446

Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package.

Following the same procedure as prior methods of analysis, we also calculated latent class models for the six items referring to national parliament and the six items referring to preferred political party separately. The most informative models are the three and four-class models for evaluations of national parliament. The three-class model splits respondents into those registering high distrust, those with average and those with positive evaluations. Moving from three to four classes allows for a further distinction within the distrusting group, between those respondents who choose extreme negative evaluations (values 6-7) and those with milder distrusting attitudes. It also becomes apparent that perceptions of deviating interests are the easiest items to respond negatively. The analysis of items evaluating the respondents' preferred party shows a different picture. Here the three-class model identifies respondents clustering away from the extreme negative end of the scale. Moving from the three to the four-class model, does identify a group of respondents who give distrusting responses (Class 2, 17% of sample) and the remaining three groups show higher probability of responses in the middle, middle-low and lower end of the scale. It is worth noting that although we can see that it is easier to formulate negative evaluations on the retrospective compared to the prospective items, we do not see any classes forming on the basis of this distinction in either analysis (Figures 5.4.3-5.4.6 in Appendix H).

The purpose of this additional type of analysis is to investigate the structure of the data from a different perspective: that of the respondents. We consider this perspective to be important, as it could potentially highlight subgroups of respondents that formulate perceptions of

political untrustworthiness following different patterns of evaluations. Political distrust is, after all, an attitude held by a citizen towards the political system, and it is reasonable to expect that different combinations of evaluations might be at play for different people. Although we do not find an such evidence in our analysis, we need to note that our group of respondents is not a representative sample of the UK population, and therefore all patterns of associations and structures cannot be generalised to the wider population in any sound statistical way. Nevertheless, this is a first step in investigating such patterns of assessment and respondent subgroups.

Overall, and in line with previous analyses, respondents are split into groups depending on the range of negative evaluations registered uniformly across all items tapping into perceptions of political untrustworthiness. Respondents approach evaluations of technical incompetence, ethical misconduct and diverging interests, retrospective and prospective, in a similar manner, and to a large extent evaluate their preferred party and national parliament along the same lines. In this sense, LCA findings add support to the results of the more widely used item-focused factor analysis. They confirm the view that to a certain extent respondents distinguish between the untrustworthiness of different political targets, the national parliament and political party of choice, however distrusting attitudes towards the two targets are strongly associated. This could be attributed to the fact that citizens perceive different subcomponents of the political system to share the wider culture of political trustworthiness – or political untrustworthiness. Even items that are meant to tap into perceptions regarding the political conduct of one's preferred part of the political system are not completely independent from perceptions of the institution of national parliament. This could also be a reflection of the fact that citizen attitudes of distrust are formed and influenced by similar antecedents, information and events, and hence distrust or trust in different parts of the political system tend to move in tandem.

Similarly, we do not distinguish any respondent group from the total sample based on a pattern of negative evaluations according to the domain being judged. Retrospective and prospective perceptions of technical failure, unethical conduct and incongruent interests are formed along similar lines. Earlier analyses showed that some negative evaluations might be easier to express than others across all respondents, namely, interest-based considerations of national parliament, yet we do not find a respondent group that is much more likely to differentiate itself based on this assessment. The analysis of latent classes has instead shifted

the focus to two groups of response patterns that have not been identified previously: respondents who consistently chose categories of extreme negative values and responses of complete distrust, and respondents who did not simply register average evaluations, but opted for the middle-point offered in categorical scales throughout the 12 items. This latter group forces us to question what this middle category stands for, while the former highlights a response group of particular interest: those respondents that perceive political actors extremely negatively across the board, without differentiating between retrospective, prospective evidence, evaluative dimensions or particular political agents. We will be investigating this group further in the following chapter of the thesis.

5.4 Implications for the conceptual model of political distrust

Following the analyses carried out in this chapter, what insights have we gained into the internal structure of distrusting political attitudes? Firstly, we can confirm that the three lines of evaluating political untrustworthiness, as identified in earlier qualitative research, do indeed tap into a single underlying attitude and can be considered together to form a reliable indicator of political distrust. Respondents differentiate to some extent between ethical, technical and interest-based considerations, and this is particularly evident when looking at perceptions of deviating interests. The evaluations correlate strongly per time projection and political target, but we also find strong correlations per evaluative dimension across targets and time projections, at least for technical and ethical considerations. Perceptions of political untrustworthiness based on diverging interests are associated with other evaluations in a more complex pattern, which highlights the many interactions between evaluations of particular subcomponents of the political system.

Overall however, respondents' evaluations are registered uniformly across these three dimensions. There are no discernible patterns of respondents who consistently evaluate political targets diametrically on two dimensions, for example technical competence and ethical conduct. We have already argued that it is analytically possible to hold both these views, and indeed some of the interviews considered in the preceding chapter made such claims. It has also been pointed out in earlier survey research that a citizen may consider political agents to be able, competent and successful in what they seek to achieve, while at the same time feeling that what these political agents seek to achieve is unfair and goes

against accepted moral norms (Seligson, 1983). Of course, in such cases one can argue that it is the normative evaluation that would correctly capture the attitude of distrust, since interacting with a politician that is perceived not to be incompetent but to function in an unethical manner would still increase the chances of negative outcomes for citizens. Nevertheless, no such patterns emerged from our sample. Citizens' perceptions of political untrustworthiness along these three evaluative dimensions are distinct but run in similar directions.

What the analysis did point to is that, in certain cases, there is an internal hierarchy among the different evaluative dimensions, as some are better able to capture attitudes of political distrust than others. Beliefs about future unethical and unfair political practices are a central component of overall attitudes of political distrust. For each political target, prospective ethical items load more strongly on the underlying identified factor and correlate highest with the overall distrust scale. Although the differences between items tapping into evaluations of technical competence and ethical conduct are small, there is enough evidence to suggest that ethical judgments play a key role in the decision to distrust and that such negative evaluations are able to capture more distrust than negative technical or interest-based evaluations. Once we consider all the items together, the evidence pointing to this hierarchy disappears; nevertheless, it is possible, and conceptually interesting, to think of levels in expressing distrust towards particular political agents in this manner: negative perceptions based on diverging interests between the citizen and the political institution can capture distrusting attitudes more 'easily', and hence reflect less distrust than if technical and moral evaluations were as negative. Subsequently, the belief that the institutional player is likely to prove incapable to fulfil its political role provides stronger grounds for distrust, and finally, the belief that this player is also likely to function in a manner that violates shared notions of fairness and rightness reflects even stronger political distrust. We have found some evidence to support a hierarchical view of perceptions of political untrustworthiness, although additional research would be needed to investigate this cumulative nature in more depth. Already, our data is complicated by the role of the retrospective and prospective projections of each evaluative dimension and of course by the differences between evaluations of national parliament and preferred political party.[48]

[48] We also carried out Mokken scale analysis per time projections but the results where weaker and there was still no evidence of a Double Monotonicity model.

The conceptualisation and operationalisation of distrusting attitudes also entailed two time projections for each evaluation of political untrustworthiness. Following the analysis conducted in this chapter we can provide some additional comments on this aspect of distrusting attitudes as well. We have seen from the outset that there is a small, but in some cases significant, positive prospective bias that affects evaluations of both national parliament and preferred political party. Though we can only hypothesise about the reasons behind these differences at this stage, they may be driven by individuals who, despite perceiving political actors as having been untrustworthy in the past, are willing to give them the benefit of the doubt on future action or by a human need for hope that affects perceptions of future political trustworthiness. After all, no citizen wishes to live under a political system he considers untrustworthy.

Nevertheless, despite these differences, our analyses suggest that both retrospective and prospective evaluations tap into a single underlying attitude. Prospective items are better placed to capture political distrust and, to some extent, negative assessments regarding future political conduct reflect more distrust than negative assessments of past conduct. This is an interesting point that we will consider further in the following chapters. If prospective evaluations regarding the type of political conduct to be expected are formulated solely on the basis of past indicators and experiences, the retrospective and prospective items should not differ. But in our survey 55-60% of respondents changed their evaluations between retrospective and prospective items. In narrative interviews analysed in the preceding chapter, we also saw that expressions of political distrust that followed retrospective assessments were phrased in more specific terms, using more concrete examples and events that were made available from the citizen's memory. On the other hand, expectations regarding future untrustworthy conduct were inevitably phrased in more general terms and placed greater emphasis on personal beliefs about the future. Given that, strictly speaking, the future is always uncertain, researchers of political trust have often highlighted the important role that faith in the system plays for maintaining citizens' cooperative stance despite past disappointing political performance. We also find that beliefs regarding future political conduct are important attributes of political distrust, along with retrospective evaluations of untrustworthiness.

Conceptually, political distrust can be established entirely on the basis of past negative experiences that will prevent any further cooperation and hence the possibility to reassess the trustworthiness of political agents. It would be very interesting to investigate whether the

difference between retrospective and prospective evaluations depends on the overall levels of political distrust in a given country. In our sample, we could not find any different categories of respondents that formulated retrospective and prospective perceptions of political untrustworthiness following a different pattern than that described above.

We have established therefore that the three lines of evaluating political agents and the retrospective and prospective nature of these assessments tap into attitudes of political distrust, following the conceptual model advanced in this thesis. Since we have asked respondents to evaluate two subcomponents of their political system, we were also able to look at the differences between perceptions of untrustworthiness for the national parliament and for the respondents' preferred political party. As expected, respondents tend to evaluate their preferred party less negatively than national parliament, yet perceptions of untrustworthiness are still positively related. We did not find any evidence of ordering among items tapping into evaluations of parliament and preferred party, although, conceptually, there are good reasons to consider whether distrust of parliament and preferred party might be connected hierarchically. A citizen that perceives all political parties in the system as untrustworthy, even the party she considers to be closest to her preferences, is highly likely to perceive that the entire political system and its key representative institution are also untrustworthy.

Our respondents did not all follow this pattern in evaluating the two political targets, although approximately 50% of our sample gave less negative evaluations to their political party compared to parliament per item. Taking a closer look at the respondents who registered extreme distrusting attitudes, that is giving the most extreme negative evaluations (values of six and seven on the seven-point scale) for all items tapping on attitudes towards a political target, we find that more respondents actively distrust their parliament than their preferred party. From 785 total respondents, 68 registered extreme distrust of parliament and 31 distrusted their preferred party. Only 21 respondents claimed to have complete distrust in both political agents, and these are some of the respondents identified by the latent class model as the extreme distrusters, choosing extreme negative values for all 12 items. These 21 respondents are part of the 31 people in our sample recording complete distrust in the political party they supported, while the remaining ten respondents registered distrusting attitudes towards parliament, but not on all six evaluations. In fact, no respondents expressed complete distrust in the political party of their choice and at the same time no extreme distrust in any of their evaluations of national parliament. On the opposite side, 32

respondents indicated complete distrust of national parliament and did not give any extreme negative evaluations to their preferred political party.[49] Therefore, we can see that even on the extreme negative side of evaluations, the majority of respondents who completely distrust their party also distrust national parliament, but only a third of those who completely distrust Parliament also distrust their party.

Overall, perceptions of untrustworthiness for two different parts of the political system are positively and strongly correlated. The differences in responses can be attributed to the fact that by virtue of representing the respondent's chosen subcomponent of the political system, preferred party will be evaluated more sympathetically along all dimensions. It is equally possible that differences also arise from the distinctive practical nature of the two political objects. One is a partisan political agent that advances the interests and preferences of a part of society and is mostly identified with the people, personalities, ideology, issue preferences or pursued policies. National parliament, on the other hand, is a representative institution for the entire democratic polity and it incorporates democratic processes, functions and symbols, as well as the political class and party majorities currently in place. It is therefore expected that, although the same evaluative dimensions hold for assessing political untrustworthiness, there are different influences when considering the two political targets. Not simply in the way that citizens may prioritise one evaluative dimension over another, but through the events, experiences and information one uses to evaluate specific parts of the political system.

Based on the conceptualisation of political distrust, it follows that citizen perceptions may vary across different political agents. Citizens can reach different conclusions regarding the technical incompetence, ethics and interests of different parts of the political system. They may distrust the government, but not the entire parliament, or the opposite way around. Similarly, they may distrust local government, but not national government, and vice versa, simply because different agents are involved in each evaluation, different expectations may be formed and different evidence may be relevant to their assessment. It is these variations which, although often small, allow political distrust to be based on the citizen's cognitive processing and be open to change when evidence and information alter.

[49] Further analysis on that specific group of respondents shows that although it does not stand out on any demographic characteristics, its members have a statistically significant higher mean probability to vote for UKIP (the UK Independence Party, sitting at the far right of the main political parties and employing an anti-elit rhetoric) than the rest of the respondents.

At the same time, perceptions of untrustworthiness are not independent from each other. Even if we separate the items into two indicators of political distrust for each political target, these two indicators are positively and strongly correlated. The more a citizen perceives one part of her political system to be untrustworthy, the more likely she is to perceive that other parts of the system and the system in its entirety is untrustworthy. We discussed the potential direction of distrust spill-overs in the preceding chapter, as these emerged from citizen narratives of distrust. What we observe in the present analysis is that the individual evaluative items capture an overarching latent attitude of political distrust, along with specific elements relevant to the political untrustworthiness of each political agent. Multivariate analysis showed that all items loaded strongly on a single latent factor and that including all evaluations in a single indicator provides a unidimensional, homogenous and reliable scale of political distrust. Alternatively, we create two individual distrust indicators, one for each political target, with the two scales being strongly related (r=.55).

There are three potential interpretations for this finding, which we referred to in the conceptual chapter of the thesis and would like to briefly revisit here. These three interpretations are often presented as contesting one another, but we would argue that they are simply explaining the same phenomenon from different viewpoints. The first views political distrust as a unidimensional concept, because it is taken to reflect the features of the political culture of the entire system. It follows a macro-level approach and focuses on the uniformity of political qualities in any given system (Hooghe, 2011). Alternatively, a micro-level approach emphasises the features of the individual citizen that lead them to express distrust across most aspects of social and political life (Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011). Third, we can interpret this consistency by recalling the heuristic nature of political distrust attitudes. Political distrust does not simply act as a cognitive shortcut for future action and decision-making, but also as a cognitive shortcut for itself, shaping all political evaluations and thought processes regarding political players.

The three interpretations have their merits and are more likely to be functioning in combination, rather than exclusively, in influencing distrusting attitudes. Indeed, dramatic variations in the trustworthiness of political agents do not occur often in any given system, although some differences do exist and overlooking them may inhibit progress in understanding how particular judgments of distrust influence other attitudes and what can be done to remedy them. Similarly, it is possible that systematic ‘losers’ or ‘winners’ in society will evaluate political agents uniformly due to their developed predispositions. Yet, the

fluctuations in distrust and variation of responses along different evaluative dimensions suggest there are additional forces at play.

Interpreting similarities in perceptions of political distrust using the idea of distrust as a heuristic mechanism is a promising avenue. In the context of our study, this view offers insights into the operation of distrusting attitudes that supplement the conceptual model advanced in the thesis. We can argue that political distrust entails both a dynamic process that is evaluation-specific and consideration-based, and an overarching heuristic-driven process. This means we can, and should, think of citizens' expressions of political distrust both as a combination of assessments of the political system and its agents based on retrospective and prospective technical, ethical and interest-based considerations, and as an overall attitude of distrust that influences specific assessments and future decision-making. The distrust heuristic implies that no matter which component of the political system a citizen is asked to assess or which evaluative dimension she is asked about, the result will always be the same negative attitude of distrust. It is perhaps this dual function of political distrust that has caused confusion in interpreting citizen attitudes on top of the well-documented debate of specific and diffuse support. After all, continuous disappointing and untrustworthy political conduct, even when it is attributed to specific political agents, can spill over to more general evaluations regarding the political system. Equally, overarching attitudes of political distrust spill over and colour most evaluations of political agents in a system. Highlighting this double operation of distrusting attitudes can resolve some of the confusion surrounding the meaning and measurement of political distrust and improve our understanding of this attitude area.

Turning to the survey indicator at hand, does it make more sense to speak of a single distrust attitude, or of a multidimensional attitude encompassing distrusting assessments of different parts of the political system? Our analysis suggests that the answer is, both. We believe we can confidently create a homogenous and reliable scale of political distrust by including all evaluative items. At the same time, we can also speak of distrust towards specific parts of the political system, in our case towards national parliament and preferred political party, and create two separate indicators that capture perceptions of untrustworthiness for each target – bearing in mind they are not entirely independent from each other. In the following chapters we will consider these indices, as well as the individual evaluative items, and investigate associations with other political attitudes and behavioural intentions relating to citizens' political behaviour.

5.5 Discussing about validity and conclusion

The final analysis presented in this chapter addresses issue of validity of our measure. Throughout this chapter, we have referred to the new items as tapping into attitudes of political distrust and of their aggregate scale as political distrust. However, as this is an entirely novel measure, it is necessary to justify our claim that these items provide a valid and reliable measurement of political distrust attitudes. In the following paragraphs we discuss the measure's face and construct validity and provide remarks on the insights afforded by this chapter.

Both reliability and Mokken analysis showed that the resultant scale (or scales, for each political target) are reliable and capture a single latent attitude. Are we thus justified in thinking of this as an attitude of political distrust? We believe we are. Based on the research design of the thesis and the exploratory research conducted in three European nations, including the country where the quantitative data originated, these survey items were formulated to capture citizens' perceptions of political untrustworthiness. Perceptions of untrustworthiness were taken to reflect failure on technical matters and functions, unethical or unjust practices and outputs, and failure or unwillingness to protect the citizen's best-interest. These negative political orientations have also been identified by political scientists studying citizen attitudes since the 1960s. Although they have not been brought together in this manner before, analytically and conceptually we can expect that a citizen who perceives a political agent to have been technically incompetent, unethical and to have failed to protect her best-interest is expressing distrust towards that agent. The decision to include both retrospective and prospective assessments may have been guided by empirical findings in exploratory research, but the two time projections are also conceptually fundamentally important for the concept we are investigating. Including only prospective political assessments might inadvertently be tapping more strongly into underlying optimistic or pessimistic personal worldviews. Negative retrospective and prospective evaluations of political agents along these three dimensions combine past evidence available in the citizen's cognitive and affective reservoir, as well as beliefs about the prospective likelihood of untrustworthy behaviour.

Certainly, a political system contains a multitude of political groups, institutions, agents and policy domains, and hence there are plentiful combinations of political targets we could ask respondents to assess. The choices of national parliament and preferred political party have been explained earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 3. An additional advantage of these parts of the political system is that they are less influenced by personal partisan affiliations than for example perceptions of national government. They are not completely immune from such influences; the parliament still includes the elected political class and partisan majorities, and strength of partisanship may affect technical, ethical and interest-based evaluations of one's preferred party. Yet it would be hard to argue that these items tap into partisan evaluations instead of political distrust. In fact, we believe that the novelty of asking respondents about their preferred political party, as opposed to political parties in general (which regularly receive the lowest trust scores in European democracies) allows us to tap into the lower bound of political distrust with limited influence from ideology or partisanship effects.

It can therefore be argued in good faith that respondents who agree with such negative evaluations of key political agents are expressing an attitude of distrust in politics. A further test that can boost our claim to a valid measure for political distrust refers to construct validity. In other words, if the new measure of political distrust behaves in a manner consistent with what existing theory about how attitudes of political distrust relate to other variables, this would provide evidence of a valid measure. We check construct validity using three sources of comparison for the new measure of political distrust. Firstly, we have theoretically informed expectations regarding the association between political distrust and external variables. Secondly, we include a traditionally phrased single item measuring trust in the British Parliament.[50] This single trust in parliament item provides an additional source of comparison for associations within the same respondent sample. Finally, we use external associations of political trust measures available from the closest European Social Survey (conducted a year earlier than our survey) using a representative sample of the population in Great Britain to check for any discrepancies.

We checked associations between our composite index of political distrust, including all evaluative items and a series of respondent characteristics that are related to political distrust

[50] The exact question read: "Please indicate how much you trust each of the following institutions to usually take the right decisions: The British Parliament".

theoretically and empirically, through existing research. These variables are political cynicism, democratic satisfaction, political efficacy, political knowledge, strength of identification with the UK, left-right ideological position and respondent demographic information. A more comprehensive discussion of the different variables used in our survey can be found in Chapter 6. Also Chapter 2.6 elaborates on the theoretical links and importance of these related concepts.

We expected to find a positive and strong association between attitudes of political cynicism and attitudes of political distrust. Although we have argued that cynicism and distrust are conceptually distinct the two are still strongly related. Levels of satisfaction with the workings of democracy capture more fluid attitudes of political support, sensitive to changes in government and economic performance and, hence, this variable is expected to relate to distrusting political attitudes in a negative way. Further, strong feelings of political efficacy are expected to be negatively associated with attitudes of distrust, given that those who feel like their actions and choices can influence political processes for the better are less likely to believe that those processes are malfunctioning or that politicians are behaving incompetently, unethically and against the citizen's best-interest. The theoretical association between the two constructs is of course more nuanced, with political efficacy being also dependent on overall levels of political knowledge, political interest and even levels of education.

The association between levels of political knowledge or education and political distrust is contested theoretically, though empirical survey evidence usually points to a negative association. The 'winners hypothesis' of political trust suggests that increased levels of information and knowledge, which ordinarily go hand in hand with higher levels of education and socioeconomic status, are negatively associated with political distrust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011; Uslaner 2002, Scheidegger and Staerklé, 2011). We also use respondents' strength of identification with the UK as an additional measure. The association between identification with one's nation and political distrust is complex and causality can be argued, theoretically, to run in either direction. Nevertheless, we would expect that attitudes of political distrust are related to a rupture in the citizen-state relationship and destroy one's ability and willingness to identify with a political collective. The measure of ideological self-placement in a left-right spectrum can also help test the validity of our distrust indicator. Respondents placing themselves on the right end of the scale tend to have higher trust in

political institutions and especially institutions of the state. Acceptance of political authority and endorsement of agents setting law and promoting order are both characteristics associated with right-wing ideology and lead to more positive evaluations of state institutions. Conversely, citizens who place themselves on the left end of the ideological spectrum tend to challenge the operations of the state more and hence express greater distrust of political agents and political institutions.[51] Finally, there are two respondent characteristics to include in our investigation, which are age and gender.

Table 5.7 presents correlation measures between these variables and the new political distrust index, as well as the single trust in parliament item. For further sources of comparison, Table 5.7.1 presents association measures between trust indicators and a limited list of external variables available from a representative sample survey conducted in the UK in 2012. Both tables largely confirm the expected direction of association between the newly constructed political distrust scale and external variables, providing evidence of the measures' validity. Only the association between education level and political distrust does not reach statistical significance, although we might have expected to see even a weak negative correlation of education and distrust, as seen by the single trust item and in the European Social Survey data.

Table 5.7: Bivariate correlations between distrust measures and external variables

	Political Distrust Index	Single Item Trust British Parliament
Antecedents		
Political Cynicism	.450*	-.519*
UK Identification Strength	-.270*	.343*
Political Knowledge	-.078*	.097*
Political Efficacy	-.411*	.300*
LR Ideology	-.242*	.208*
Demographics		

[51] This effect should be enhanced by the fact that the current government at Westminster at the time of survey was headed by the Conservative Party, in a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, and hence Labour supporters could perceive Parliament to produce an output that is in line with Conservative policies and priorities. We have much less theoretical and empirical prior indication about the association between left-leaning or right-leaning ideology and distrust of one's preferred party of support. However, given the nature of the Westminster Parliament and evidence from the popular interviews conducted in the UK just a few months before the survey, former Labour Party supporters showed clear disappointment over the party's past choices and its inability to stop Conservative policies. Hence, it is possible that again, the political party being in power may receive a boost in its apparent performance.

Age	-.022	.063
Gender (Male)	-.010	.015
Education	-.041	.087*
Political Support		
Democratic Satisfaction	-.586*	.711*
Traditional Trust British Parliament	-.643*	1

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients. * Correlation is significant at the .05 level.*

Table 5.7.1: Correlation coefficients for trust measures, Great Britain ESS6, 2012

	Trust in Parliament	Political Trust (Index)
Political Interest	.191*	.023
LR Ideology	.184*	.167*
Age	-.015	.021
Gender (Male)	.033	-.030
Education	.147*	.060*
Democratic Satisfaction	.567*	.458*

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients calculated using the ESS6 GB sample, n=2285. 'Trust in Parliament' is a single survey item measured on a 0-10 scale. 'Political Trust' is an index calculated using trust items for Parliament, the legal system, police, politicians and political parties (a=.871). * Correlation is significant at the .05 level.*

Looking at the remaining associations, political cynicism and identification with the UK are positively correlated with the index of political distrust. Further, political knowledge and political efficacy are negatively associated with our measure. The closest measure available in the ESS survey and fit for comparison is a measure of political interest which shows the expected weak, but positive relationship between trust in parliament and interest in politics. This relationship however is lost once a political trust index is used, highlighting the ambivalent association between the two concepts. Ideological placement in a left-right scale is also associated with our measures of political distrust as expected, and this relationship is confirmed by the single trust in parliament item and the ESS data. Personal characteristics of gender and age are not associated with political distrust levels in any significant way. Finally, measures of democratic satisfaction are also related to the indices of political distrust in the hypothesised way.

A final test of the new items is to explore the relationship between the distribution of responses to the single trust in parliament item included in the survey with the new index of political distrust. As the correlation coefficient in Table 5.7 show, the two measures are strongly associated, but the association is far from perfect. The single item asking respondents how much they trust national parliament is correlated at r=-.643 with the political distrust index. This strong association points to the additional facets of distrusting attitudes captured by the 12 items tapping into different aspects of political distrust, but also provides additional support for the validity of the new measures.

In conclusion, this chapter has investigated the survey items tapping into citizen attitudes of political distrust with the aim of revealing the internal structure of the data and adding to our understanding of distrusting attitudes. It has provided ample evidence to support the conceptual model of political distrust advanced throughout the thesis, supplementing this with new insights regarding the prominence of certain evaluative dimensions and the differences between retrospective and prospective assessments of political untrustworthiness. It also interpreted findings from multiple analyses regarding the structure of distrusting attitudes and identified two mechanisms in which these attitudes operate, which are both evaluation-based and heuristic-driven. Further, it addressed several measurement issues and justified the use of an index of political distrust as well as two separate indices for distrusting attitudes towards two components of the political system as valid and reliable indicators for subsequent analyses in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: Political Distrust through Technical, Moral and Congruence Evaluations: What Evaluations Matter?

6.1 Examining association of distrusting attitudes with related political concepts
6.2 Examining associations of distrusting attitudes with behavioural intentions
6.3 Investigating the distrust heuristic
6.4 Discussion of the new measures' contribution and conclusion

This chapter examines how attitudes of political distrust are associated firstly, with key citizen characteristics and related political concepts, and secondly with behavioural intentions regarding citizens' political participation. This part of the thesis seeks to explore which aspects of political distrust matter most for citizens' political behaviour? Based on insights from earlier analyses, we investigate how different subcomponents of political distrust connect to related notions discussed in earlier chapters. We find that although there are no major variations in the way different evaluations of political untrustworthiness are associated with other political attitudes and citizen characteristics, assessments of preferred political party and national parliament show some important differences in relation to levels of political knowledge, efficacy and cynicism.

We ask whether particular assessments of political untrustworthiness are more central than others in influencing behavioural intentions related to political action. An important part of the value in studying attitudes of political trust and distrust for political scientists is the behavioural manifestations such attitudes give rise to and their implications for democratic politics. Although in the scope of this thesis we cannot study realised behaviour, we can assess the role of distrust in motivating behavioural intentions. This allows us to better understand the structure of political distrust judgments by establishing which aspects of distrust are more powerful in shaping considerations for actions that contribute to democratic processes or distance citizens from the political system. Although the methodological approach is not designed to investigate causal relations, we are motivated by theoretical reasons and earlier research in arguing that associations between distrust and behavioural intentions indicate an influence of the former on the latter.[52]

[52] The exact phrasing of the behavioural intention items used in this analysis can be found in Appendix G. Respondents are asked to indicate whether they would consider actions such as abstaining in elections and participating in demonstrations, when they are unhappy with the situation in their country. These questions

Recalling the discussion on the association between political distrust and related attitudes in Chapter 2, we sought to investigate the potential motivating and demotivating influence of distrusting attitudes on political behavior. We find that, contrary to our expectations, distrust of national parliament based on considerations of diverging interests is not enough to motivate disruptive behaviour, such as abstaining from an election or leaving the country, though it can enhance a citizen's intention to participate by demonstrating in a peaceful manner. In accordance with the discussion in the earlier parts of the thesis, we find that perceptions of untrustworthiness based on ethical judgments are stronger in motivating such actions that can be considered as disruptive for political processes. Further, we present some evidence that suggests distrust targeted at different parts of the political system can have the opposite influence on a citizen's intention to participate in politics in an active manner. Distrusting attitudes targeted towards one's preferred party demotivate participation through democratic avenues, whereas distrusting attitudes based on negative ethical and interest-based assessments of parliament can prove motivating for such action. Though overall, the aggregate indicator of political distrust suggests increased distrust leads citizens to consider more action that weakens democratic processes and less active political participation, the pathways of these effects are varied.

Finally, we choose to investigate in more detail the group of respondents who register active political distrust along all evaluative dimensions and time projections and for both national parliament and preferred political party. We interpret their unwillingness or inability to make any distinction between the evaluative items as an illustration of the distrust heuristic mechanism taking over. To explore this function of distrusting attitudes further, we look at whether this group of individuals can be distinguished from those who formulate distrusting judgments following a combination of evaluation. We find that this group can be distinguished both on the basis of their average level of political knowledge, education profile and their intention to consider disruptive forms of political action.

clearly tap on intentions of political action in the case of political grievances, not actual behaviour but they provide a useful insight to relation between distrusting attitudes and the potential range of actions a citizen could envisage taking once he is displeased with politics.

6.1 Examining association of distrusting attitudes with related political concepts

The first section of the final empirical chapter of this thesis presents further analyses of the associations between the new measure of political distrust and citizen characteristics, building on insights from the preceding chapter. We have already introduced the key political attitudes and respondent characteristics that are expected to be associated with political distrust. These were used in the preceding chapter to provide a construct validity test for the new political distrust indicator created. In this chapter, we take advantage of the multiple items included in the measure of political distrust and examine these associations for each evaluative dimension, time projection and different political target of distrust. Before looking at each individual item, we compare how distrust in national parliament and distrust in preferred party relate to political attitudes of political cynicism, political efficacy, political knowledge, strength of identification with the UK and left-right ideological position, and respondent demographics. This analysis provides meaningful information about the subcomponents of distrusting attitudes driving the associations between distrust and other political attitudes.

Before proceeding with the analysis, we note the methodological choices made in this section. The relationship between political distrust and many of the political variables considered in this section, such as political efficacy, knowledge and even cynicism, does not imply a simple one-directional causal association. Theoretically, the associations are more complex and the direction of effects can be argued to flow both ways to and from political distrust. For example, feelings of political inefficacy, that is, the belief that a citizen cannot comprehend nor meaningfully contribute to political processes, should boost negative perceptions of political agents and distrust towards the political system. At the same time, distrusting attitudes towards the political system and perceptions of untrustworthy political agents can also be expected to contribute to feelings of inefficacy and the belief that one cannot influence political processes. Unfortunately, in the context of this research project we are not able to address the question of causal direction. Nevertheless, given the multiple item indicator of political distrust, we can investigate the subcomponents of political distrust that are driving the association, whether certain evaluative dimensions are related more strongly to feelings of efficacy and whether evaluations of national parliament or preferred party are influenced more strongly, which provide novel information regarding the relationship of efficacy and distrust.

Similarly, political knowledge can be thought to influence and be influenced by distrusting attitudes. Most often we consider the association to run from political knowledge to attitudes of distrust, and expect increased levels of knowledge to render political agents and institutions more familiar, more approachable and contribute to less negative perceptions of politics. However, attitudes of political distrust can also influence the amount of political knowledge citizens seek; a citizen that considers their political system to be untrustworthy may be driven to 'switch off' from political discussion and information. We recognise that both processes are possible and for this part of our analysis we cannot make any claims as to the direction of causality. Yet, there are good reasons to believe that all of the aforementioned factors to a certain extent influence levels of political distrust, and hence we can use them as independent variables in a regression model in order to isolate the effect of each variable on the subcomponent of distrust.

We first present measures of bivariate associations for the three political distrust indices (distrust of preferred party, distrust of national parliament and the composite index of political distrust), as well as the single trust in parliament item included in the survey, before presenting the results of the regression analysis. Table 6.1 shows correlation measures for distrust indices and other citizen characteristics. Looking at the bivariate associations, we can see that political cynicism and identification with the UK positively correlate with the measures of political distrust. It is worth noting that these correlate more strongly with the single traditionally phrased trust in parliament item, which aims to capture trust by intuition, rather than tapping into its different aspects using different attitude statements. The association between distrust and cynical traits and national identification appears to be weaker when respondents are asked to assess political targets on their past and future actions along specific technical, ethical and interest-based lines.

Table 6.1: Bivariate correlations between distrust indicators, political attitudes and citizen characteristics

	Distrust Parliament Index	Distrust Preferred Political Party Index	Political Distrust Index	Single Item Trust British Parliament
Political Cynicism	.478*	.314*	.450*	-.519*
Political Efficacy	-.267*	-.459*	-.411*	.300*
Political Knowledge	.020	-.160*	-.078*	.097*
UK Identification Strength	-.237*	-.239*	-.270*	.343*
LR Ideology	-.247*	-.179*	-.242*	.208*
Age	.050	-.091*	-.022	.063
Gender (Male)	.055	-.039	.010	.015
Education	-.044	-.027	-.041	.087*
Traditional Trust British Parliament	-.632*	-.461*	-.643*	1

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients. * Correlation is significant at the .05 level.*

On the contrary, political efficacy, political knowledge and left-right ideological placement are associated more strongly with the distrust indices than the single trust item. For the measure of political efficacy, the negative association with distrust is driven more strongly by perceptions of one's preferred political party than national parliament. Similarly, the association between political knowledge and distrust is driven by distrust in one's preferred party. The relationship between perceptions of untrustworthiness and knowledge is negative, although weak. As hypothesised in the section above, increased levels of political information are linked to less political distrust, insofar as this is captured by the distrust in preferred party index. The correlation between distrust of parliament and political knowledge does not reach statistical significance, which is slightly surprising given that the single trust in parliament measure is positively, albeit very weakly, correlated to political knowledge. In the next few sections of this chapter, we intend to further investigate the relationship between political knowledge and political distrust, examining the relationship with subcomponents of distrusting attitudes controlling for other respondent characteristics.

Ideological placement on a left-right scale is an interesting respondent characteristic that interacts with political distrust attitudes on two levels. Firstly, more right-wing or conservative ideology is associated with higher approval for and favourable perceptions of

political institutions, whereas left-wing ideology has traditionally been linked with more defiant attitudes towards political authority and negative orientations towards hierarchical political institutions. Although the left-right ideological spectrum varies considerably between national contexts and national party-systems, we expect to find a similar relationship in the UK population. At a second level, we cannot neglect the party effect entailed in ideological placement along a left-right dimension, both in the context of the UK majoritarian political system and of course in evaluations of one's preferred partisan group. With a Conservative Party lead government and Conservative-Liberal Democrat majority in the House of Commons during the time of our survey, we can expect that perceptions of political untrustworthiness for national parliament to be boosted by partisan considerations. In particular, retrospective interest-based evaluations should be more negative for supporters of the left and left-leaning ideologues and less negative for supporters of the right.

For evaluations of preferred political party, ideology should have less of an influence if we assume that each respondent is assessing the political party closest to their ideological preference on a left-right dimension. Nevertheless, we still find a weak but negative correlation, pointing to the fact that respondents who place themselves towards the left (lower end of the left-right scale) report more distrusting attitudes towards their chosen party. This finding is in line with evidence from citizen interviews carried out a few months prior to the survey, where left-leaning citizens and former Labour Party supporters often evaluated their party in a negative manner, referring to policy failures, dubious decisions taken while in government and general disappointment for the party not representing the ideological space.

In terms of other respondent demographic characteristics, gender and age are not associated with political distrust levels in any significant way, although we do find a small association between age and distrust in the political party of one's choice. Perceptions of untrustworthiness are more prevalent among younger respondents, while older respondents record more favourable evaluations of their preferred party: a finding that is in line with party identification theories where party attachment strengthens through time (Campbell et al., 1960). Finally, we have included a single measure of asking respondents' level of trust in their parliament, which correlates moderately to strongly, but far from perfectly with our political distrust index. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, using multiple items to tap into attitudes of political distrust through different evaluative dimensions, time projections and political targets helps us to capture additional aspects of distrusting attitudes that could

not be captured by a single trust survey question. None of the measures of association in Table 6.1 is so high as to suggest that our indices are inadvertently capturing some other latent attitude.

As a second step in the analysis of associations between the new indices of political distrust and political variables, Table 6.2 below presents the results of multiple regression analysis for distrust of parliament and distrust of political party indices, as well as the aggregate political distrust index. We are mainly interested in what happens to the effects we have identified once we control for all other respondent characteristics: which associations remain, which are explained away by other more powerful variables and which ones are altered?

Table 6.2: Regression results showing partial associations of political characteristics and distrust indices

Dependent Variable	Model 1 Distrust Parliament Index	Model 2 Distrust Preferred Political Party Index	Model 3 Political Distrust Index
Independent Variables			
Political Cynicism	.690***	.346***	.519***
	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Political Knowledge	.250**	-.140	.055
	(.12)	(.13)	(.10)
Political Efficacy	-.144***	-.337***	-.241***
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
UK Identification Strength	-.120***	-.089***	-.105***
	(.03)	(.03)	(.02)
L-R Ideology	-.119***	-.055***	-.087***
	(.02)	(.02)	(.01)
2. Middle level Education	.004	.072	.038
	(.11)	(.12)	(.10)
3. Higher Level Education	.054	.127	.091
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.12)	(.12)	(.10)
Age	.008***	.004	.005***
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
Male	.093	.009	.05
	(.07)	(.07)	(.062)
Constant	2.947*** (.32)	4.496***(.32)	3.722*** (.27)
R-squared	.347	.291	.374

*Note: OLS regression analysis, entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

A few differences become readily apparent in the determinants of the two indices. Firstly political cynicism has twice as powerful an association with distrusting attitudes towards national parliament than towards one's preferred party. Of course, evaluations of preferred party are not immune from one's cynical approach to the political world, but it seems that the chosen subcomponent of the political system is influenced less by overall cynical predispositions. The direction of the effect is clearly positive for all indices, with higher levels of political cynicism fuelling greater distrust. Feelings of political efficacy are still more strongly associated with less negative evaluations of the citizens' chosen political agent than evaluations of national parliament.

Interestingly, the effect of political knowledge alters once we control for the remaining respondent characteristics. On the basis of bivariate correlations we failed to find a significant linear association between political knowledge scores and distrusting evaluations of national parliament. However, in the regression analysis we find a positive and significant effect of political knowledge on distrust of national parliament. In other words, when it comes to assessing the trustworthiness of national parliament, respondents who score higher on the political knowledge indicator are more likely to distrust parliament than those respondents with a lower political knowledge score, given the same levels of political cynicism, efficacy and other characteristics. Here, the direction of the association goes against previously stated expectations. In the earlier chapters of this thesis we noted that the way in which political distrust is expected to relate to other concepts central to political behaviour has often been contested both theoretically and empirically. This has been the case for political action and behavioural intentions, which we will be addressing in the following section, but also for political knowledge and education. Indeed, increased levels of political knowledge and education are also expected to contribute to 'critical' assessments of political institutions and processes as they place stronger democratic demands on the system. Knowing more about the ways in which one's political system functions and the people in key positions of authority can also make one more likely to form negative assessments of these functions and agents. Alternatively, taking the opposite flow of influence, perceptions of untrustworthy political agents may motivate citizens to seek more political information and increase their levels of political knowledge.

Although we fail to find any effect on levels of education throughout our analysis (possibly as an imposed limitation of the non-representative sample), what we do find is a surprising discrepancy between the association of political knowledge and distrusting attitudes targeted at two different parts of the political system. The effect of political knowledge on evaluations of preferred party was found to be negative through bivariate correlations, with respondents that scored higher on the political knowledge measure giving less negative evaluations of their chosen political party. When controlling for feelings of political efficacy and other characteristics this effect largely disappears and is no longer significant. Therefore, in our sample, increased levels of political knowledge contribute to political distrust only through negative evaluations of parliament. The evidence is not unequivocal and the effect of political knowledge on the aggregate political distrust index does not reach statistical significance. In the case of assessments of one's preferred political party, higher levels of political

information contribute to less negative evaluations of the party's actions, in particular their expectations of untrustworthy future behaviour and belief that this party will not act in a way that goes against their personal preferences. This analysis further highlights how increased levels of information and knowledge can have a multifarious effect on political distrust, depending on other key citizen characteristics, the political object under evaluation and even the time projection of specific evaluations.

Previous analyses of distrusting attitudes were not able to delve deeper into the ways in which political attitudes and citizen characteristics are associated to political distrust. Even when different items tapping into trust in different political institutions are available, there is no way of breaking down associations further to explore what aspects of trustworthiness are shaped by different characteristics. An additional advantage of using multiple items to tap into attitudes of political distrust is that we can de-aggregate the index and examine the associations between these variables and each individual item. We have already seen differences in the way respondent characteristics influence perceptions of political untrustworthiness for national parliament and preferred political party, as well as in the way certain associations alter when controlling for remaining variables.

We can now explore the evaluative pathways in which levels of cynicism, political knowledge, efficacy and other characteristics influence distrusting attitudes. We know from earlier analysis that retrospective evaluations of national parliament produce distrusting judgements more easily than prospective ones, and that interest-based evaluative dimensions make it easier for respondents to formulate negative expectations. We also noted the prominence of moral considerations in distrusting attitudes, both towards one's preferred party and distrust of national parliament.

Table 6.3 below presents correlation measures for political attitudes and respondent characteristics for each distrust item. Although there are no sharp differences among the items tapping into perceptions of political untrustworthiness, we can see that associations are generally weaker between interest-based evaluations of national parliament than for technical and moral evaluations. This suggests that considerations of deviating interests capture some additional aspect of political distrust that refers to political preferences and interest representation. Indeed, even levels of political cynicism, which might have been expected to contribute most to perceptions of deviating interests between the citizens and political agents,

are associated more strongly with negative technical assessments. This effect is confirmed in regression analyses (Tables 6.4, 6.5), where political cynicism contributes more to assessments of technical incompetence, both for national parliament and preferred party.

Political efficacy is negatively associated with perceptions of political untrustworthiness, but the strongest link is with evaluations of unethical political conduct and not with evaluations of incongruent interests. Increased levels of political efficacy contribute more heavily to normative evaluations of the political system (again supported by regression analyses in Tables 6.4, 6.5). Feeling capable of understanding and influencing political processes drives respondents to evaluate political agents more positively along all three evaluative dimensions, but most of all along normative lines.

Table 6.3: Bivariate correlations between distrust items political attitudes and citizen characteristics

	Political Cynicism	Political Knowledge	Political Efficacy	UK Identification Strength	LR Ideology	Age	Gender (Male)	Education
Distrust of National Parliament								
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.455*	.017	-.242*	-.201*	-.215*	.029	.055	-.069
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.395*	.022	-.260*	-.216*	-.225*	.047	.043	-.049
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.385*	.041	-.158*	-.180*	-.238*	.076*	.034	-.018
Parliament Technical Prospective	.420*	-.004	-.243*	-.214*	-.185*	.014	.046	-.048
Parliament Moral Prospective	.407*	.001	-.250*	-.200*	-.188*	.029	.051	-.022
Parliament Interest Prospective	.344*	.023	-.190*	-.181*	-.192*	.058	.046	-.018
Distrust of Preferred Political Party								
Party Technical Retrospective	.312*	-.110*	-.411*	-.184*	-.179*	-.038	-.009	-.007
Party Moral Retrospective	.289*	-.095*	-.416*	-.183*	-.220*	-.031	-.044	-.045
Party Interest Retrospective	.252*	-.090*	-.400*	-.203*	-.181*	-.067	-.028	-.009
Party Technical Prospective	.265*	-.169*	-.357*	-.210*	-.098*	-.103*	-.037	-.020
Party Moral Prospective	.239*	-.157*	-.382*	-.218*	-.121*	-.092*	-.050	-.045
Party Interest Prospective	.244*	-.196*	-.373*	-.219*	-.110*	-.134*	-.028	-.029

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients, N=785, *p<.05.*

As expected, the opposite pattern is evident in the association between the national parliament distrust items and ideological left-right placement. Here the strongest association among the three evaluative dimensions is that which captures incongruent interests. Both retrospective and prospective evaluations of parliament are less negative among those respondents who place themselves on the right of the ideology scale, but retrospective items receive the biggest boost as a result of the Conservative-led government that had been in place for the past four years. Left-right ideology is associated more weakly with evaluations of preferred party, but the considerable coefficients between retrospective evaluations, especially moral, do reflect the comments of interview participants who identified themselves as Labour Party supporters and expressed intense feelings of disappointment with their party. The association with prospective expectations for the party's conduct is much weaker, suggesting that party supporters from across the ideological spectrum are more likely to formulate positive expectations for their preferred political party, even if they have been let down in the past. Controlling for other respondent characteristics, the effect of ideology on preferred party assessments is no longer significant for prospective evaluations (Table 6.5). If respondents' self-placement on the ideology scale in our sample mirrors their political party preference, we could claim that they are all equally confident of their party's trustworthy behaviour in the coming years.[53]

Education is still not correlated in any significant way with the individual evaluative items, failing to provide any more insights into this relationship. Finally, the other two demographic characteristics show that gender has no significant linear association with the evaluative items and that for age the relationship is only statistically significant for the prospective evaluations of preferred party behaviour. Surprisingly, distrust of national parliament and distrust of preferred party items are associated with age and gender in opposite directions. The correlation between age and evaluations of national parliament is positive, with older respondents being more distrustful of parliament, although the associations are very weak and seldom significant. These differences disappear once we control for other characteristics,

[53] Further tests indicate that Conservative, UKIP and BNP potential voters evaluate their preferred parties favourably, whereas Liberal Democrat and Labour potential voters are more sceptical and disapproving of their party's recent actions. When prompted to evaluate prospective actions, however, respondents' expectations are more positive (for Liberal Democrat voters on the moral prospective evaluation). This is in line with the overall finding of different judgments of past and future conduct, future judgments capturing more hopeful and positive expectations than retrospective ones. In the case of prospective evaluations, one's left-right ideological placement plays no part in shaping towards the preferred political party.

however, and we have some evidence that in our sample, older age contributes to more negative perceptions of political untrustworthiness.

Taking a closer look at Tables 6.4 and 6.5, which present the results of OLS multiple regression analysis for each political distrust item, we can examine this irregular effect of political knowledge on distrust. As seen by the analysis of distrust indices, once we control for political efficacy and other key respondent characteristics, increased levels of political knowledge contribute to negative evaluations of national parliament, but these are driven primarily by retrospective technical and ethical assessments. None of the other coefficients reaches statistical significance. On the other hand, increased political information contributes to positive prospective evaluations of preferred party, especially interest-based prospective expectations. Therefore, political knowledge not only influences different political targets in opposite ways, but also affects retrospective and prospective perceptions of untrustworthiness. Having more information about political players and processes may motivate unfavorable evaluations of past performance and ethical conduct, but at the same time may draw citizens closer to the political system, foster attachments with political subcomponents, such as a political party, and boost their belief in more positive prospective actions. Essentially, we find evidence that increased levels of political sophistication and knowledge can both increase and lower distrust at the same time.

We have pulled apart an initial weak but negative correlation between our political distrust index and political knowledge to uncover a fairly complex pattern of associations with different evaluative dimensions, projections and political targets. Although as political scientists we always prefer less complex models and explanations over more complicated ones, the purpose of this analysis has been to highlight that in the case of a social construct as multifaceted as political distrust, it may be beneficial to investigate complex underlying associations. When presented with contesting theoretical expectations, exploring each association and breaking down perceptions of political untrustworthiness help to produce meaningful explanations for the relations we are observing, which can further illuminate the different pathways activated by different theoretical approaches.

Table 6.4: Regression results showing partial associations of political characteristics and distrust in parliament items

Dependent Variable	Parliament Technical Retrospective	Parliament Moral Retrospective	Parliament Interest Retrospective	Parliament Technical Prospective	Parliament Moral Prospective	Parliament Interest Prospective
Independent Variables						
Political Cynicism	.792***	.711***	.697***	.711***	.695***	.534***
	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)
Political Knowledge	.314**	.333**	.230	.206	.198	.219
	(.15)	(.16)	(.16)	(.15)	(.16)	(.16)
Political Efficacy	-.155***	-.196***	-.068	-.154***	-.176***	-.119***
	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
UK Identification Strength	-.101***	-.140***	-.117***	-.129***	-.115***	-.113***
	(.03)	(.04)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
L-R Ideology	-.118***	-.130***	-.158***	-.096***	-.104***	-.112***
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
2. Middle level Education	-.171	-.100	.106	-.0340	.169	.053
	(.14)	(.15)	(.15)	(.14)	(.15)	(.14)
3. Higher Level Education	-.126	-.028	.157	.009	.200	.114
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.14)	(.16)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)	(.150)
Age	.007**	.009***	.012***	.007**	.008***	.010***
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Male	.106	.0634	.0349	.112	.134	.109
	(.09)	(.10)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)
Constant	2.682*** (.38)	3.241*** (.42)	2.870*** (.41)	2.832*** (.40)	2.706*** (.41)	3.350*** (.40)
R-squared	.298	.267	.244	.255	.245	.187

*Note: OLS regression analysis, entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.5: Regression results showing partial associations of political characteristics and distrust in preferred party items

Dependent Variable	Party Technical Retrospective	Party Moral Retrospective	Party Interest Retrospective	Party Technical Prospective	Party Moral Prospective	Party Interest Prospective
Independent Variables						
Political Cynicism	.429***	.382***	.349***	.351***	.294***	.274***
	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)
Political Knowledge	.071	.140	.189	-.297**	-.201	-.401**
	(.15)	(.15)	(.16)	(.15)	(.16)	(.16)
Political Efficacy	-.360***	-.376***	-.369***	-.280***	-.328***	-.310***
	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
UK Identification Strength	-.061	-.041	-.090**	-.096**	-.112***	-.111***
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
L-R Ideology	-.073***	-.107***	-.072***	-.017	-.030	-.027
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
2. Middle level Education	.193	.123	.149	-.054	-.041	.061
	(.14)	(.14)	(.15)	(.14)	(.15)	(.15)
3. Higher Level Education	.309**	.091	.197	.081	-.008	.093
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.14)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)	(.15)
Age	.008***	.005	.005	.002	.003	-.000
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Male	.061	-.060	-.005	.018	-.039	.079
	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)	(.09)
Constant	3.941*** (.40)	4.435*** (.40)	4.568*** (.41)	4.289*** (.40)	4.835*** (.41)	4.911*** (.40)
R-squared	.247	.254	.215	.192	.200	.199

*Note: OLS regression analysis, entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

All analyses carried out in this section study linear associations. The evaluative items tapping into distrusting attitudes are all measured using a seven-point scale, but we are also interested to determine which part of the scale is driving these associations we identified. Using the results of the latent class analysis conducted in Chapter 5, we collapsed each item response scale into three categories and test for statistically significant differences among these three groups.[54] First we compared the three groups based on their mean values of political cynicism and found that mean differences are statistically significant among each group in the expected direction. Strength of identification with the UK also shows statistically significant means among the three groups of responses for national parliament distrust items, with the least distrusting respondents scoring the highest level of identification. The differences are not significant only for retrospective interest-based evaluations of national parliament, where only the trusting group has a higher level of identification with the UK. For distrust of one's preferred political party we can see the association between identification strength and evaluations of distrust is driven by the lower end of responses. For all six items, the mean level of identification with the UK is significantly higher for the group of more positive responses.

Next we delve into the difference between the three groups of responses to parliament items and their average scores of political efficacy and political knowledge. The negative association between political efficacy and distrust in parliament is driven by the lower end of the distrust scale. Those with the least negative evaluations of parliament register significantly higher levels of political efficacy. Political knowledge, measured as a three-question politics test, is not correlated with any of the parliament distrust items in a significant way. However, there is a statistically significant difference in the average level of political knowledge for the three groups. In every one of the six evaluative items for national parliament the group of respondents opting for the middle category also score the lowest political knowledge average. This difference is significant for four evaluative items: all three retrospective evaluations and prospective evaluations for technical competence. Interestingly the average political knowledge score for respondents at the higher and lower end of the scale is similar across all evaluative items. This provides further evidence in favour of the double role played by increased amounts of information, leading to more critical and negative as well as more positive evaluations of political targets. In terms of education level,

[54] The three categories are: negative evaluations (responses '5 to 7'), average evaluations (scale midpoint, response '4') and low negative evaluations (responses 1 to 3).

unfortunately, we still do not find any statistically significant association with the distrust items. We can observe that when it comes to evaluations of national parliament, the respondent group with very negative evaluations contains a greater portion of respondents with higher levels of education and a smaller portion of respondents with lower levels of education than the trusting group, though these differences are very small.

Political knowledge and distrust of one's preferred party are significantly correlated in a negative direction, although again here we can see that the group of respondents that opts for the middle category has the lowest average political knowledge score. The main difference in the associations between the two political objects is that in the case of evaluations for preferred party the respondent group at the lower end of negative evaluations shows higher levels of political knowledge than the group at the higher end, driving that overall negative linear association. Evaluating a partisan political agent considered closest to the respondent should be an easier cognitive task than evaluating a more distant and complex political institution. A citizen with more information about politics and more confidence in understanding political processes should also be able to identify at least one party in the political arena that best represents their interests and ethical values.

In conclusion, we have seen that political cynicism is associated more strongly to negative evaluations of national parliament than to evaluations of one's chosen subcomponent of the political system, although these perceptions are not immune. We found that political knowledge, as measured through a three-question index, has a manifold relationship with measures of political distrust. The bivariate association shows that higher scores of political knowledge are linked to less distrusting attitudes towards the respondent's preferred party, while there was no link to attitudes towards the parliament. However, when controlling for other respondent characteristics, the association between political knowledge and distrust in preferred party disappears, and the effect of higher levels of political knowledge on distrust in parliament becomes positive and significant. In other words, for respondents with the same levels of cynicism, ideology, efficacy, national identification and demographic characteristics, higher levels of political knowledge result in more distrust in parliament, driven by negative retrospective assessments of technical competence and moral conduct. For assessments of preferred political party, the effect of political knowledge is explained away by feelings of political efficacy. Theoretically, both higher levels of political efficacy and higher political knowledge should be associated with the ability to identify a political agent

that one can support. In the case of political efficacy, feeling efficacious contributes to less untrustworthy perceptions of both political targets, across all evaluative dimensions. Interestingly, the specific evaluation for which efficacy feelings have the biggest effect is the one based on ethical norms and fairness. Feeling you understand and can influence political processes makes you less negative about the normative underpinnings of your preferred party, the parliament and the entire political system.

6.2 Examining associations of distrusting attitudes with behavioural intentions

From its outset, this thesis has argued that attitudes of political distrust are important to investigate due to their role in motivating citizens' political behaviour. In the definition provided in Chapter 2, a citizen's decision to distrust a political agent is made in "a context in which it affects his own action" (Gambetta, 1988: 217). Further, as we have seen from the empirical research conducted for this study, behavioural intentions feature prominently in citizen narratives of political distrust. The original formulation of civic culture entailed a citizenry that is both positively oriented towards the political system and its agents, as well as participatory in its approach to political processes. Attitudes of political distrust affect both aspects of citizens' political lives. The effect of distrust on the former is straightforward; distrusting citizens are clearly not oriented positively towards political agents and the system in general. Yet the effect of political distrust on citizens' participation habits is harder to trace. As discussed in Chapter 2, various theories have been formulated and many hypotheses have been tested regarding the effect of political distrust on citizens' political behaviour, some providing more conclusive results than others.

Much of the research investigating the link between distrusting attitudes and behaviour has focused on the specific action of electoral participation. Many empirical studies have provided evidence in favour of the hypothesis that trusting citizens are more likely to participate in politics through voting, while distrusting citizens are less likely to do so (Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2014; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005). Yet despite this evidence, political scientists have not been able to identify which subcomponents of distrusting attitudes are more central in motivating such types of political behaviour. Mapping the effects each evaluative dimension has on behavioural intentions can provide valuable information

about the relationship between distrust and political action, as well as about the most appropriate ways to remedy or tackle these phenomena. Similarly, it is useful to know whether perceptions of political untrustworthiness that are specific to one political agent are more central in citizens' consideration of abstaining, casting a blank vote and other political actions, or whether, as shown in the previous section, distrusting attitudes formulated in respect to different political agents motivate different types of behavioural intentions.

In the following paragraphs we examine these associations between distrusting attitudes, their subcomponents and a series of behavioural intentions for political participation. The behavioural intentions we consider in our study have been identified through earlier exploratory research presented in Chapter 4 and are also central to some of the theoretical debates inherited from political behaviour research in political distrust, alienation and disaffection discussed in Chapter 2. As mentioned above, studies on the effects of distrust on political behaviour have been less conclusive when it came to investigating aspects of institutional and non-institutional political participation other than voting. We chose to focus on specific actions we expect distrusting attitudes to influence, which are central to citizens' overall participant stance towards their political system. In the survey we included eight items referring to behavioural intentions. Respondents were asked about the likelihood of abstaining in an election, casting a blank vote and voting for a radical party, the likelihood of attending a peaceful or a violent demonstration, the likelihood of joining a political party or joining a pressure group, and finally the likelihood they would consider leaving the country.[55]

These items are grouped into two separate categories of political behaviour, which can arguably provide more meaningful insights into the relationship between distrust and political participation than the traditional separation of institutionalised versus non-institutionalised participation. First, items referring to the likelihood of attending a peaceful demonstration, joining a political party and joining a pressure group or NGO are grouped together in an indicator of active political participation, which represents types of citizen action that operate within the system and its democratic principles. Items referring to electoral abstaining, blank voting, voting for a radical party, joining a violent demonstration and considering moving away from the country are grouped together in an indicator denoting political action that is disruptive for the citizen-state relation and the stability of the political system. Describing all

[55] For more information on the operationalisation, wording and selection of variables see Appendix H.

of these items as types of 'participation' may be surprising, given that in some cases they entail non-participation. Still, they do involve decision-making and political action that shapes citizens' overall input to the political system.

In addition to the two indices for active political participation and disruptive participation, we look more closely at election related behaviour. Abstention or non-participation in the electoral process erodes the effectiveness and legitimacy of the democratic system and might lead to political instability over time. Hence, it is particularly interesting to determine which evaluations of political untrustworthiness motivate such types of political behaviour. Similarly, we are looking for insights into the relationship between distrusting attitudes and the intention to support an extremist, radical or anti-systemic party, which is increasingly becoming a relevant outlet for citizen frustration and placing mounting pressures on political systems in Europe. Distrust of the political system in general and the national parliament should be more central in motivating considerations of voting for a radical party, whose aim is precisely changing political processes and challenging the current system. In this instance we expect retrospective negative evaluations to be a particularly prominent factor in motivating the choice of abstention and radical voting. Distrust of national parliament due to past evidence of technical incompetence, violations of shared ethical norms and political decisions that go against the best-interest of the citizen are expected to boost considerations of voting for a radical political party that advocates a change in the political direction of the country. Distrust of national parliament should also motivate electoral abstention, but even more prominent should be perceptions of untrustworthiness related to one's preferred political party. Given that elections are political contests where citizens are called on to support their preferred political group, negative evaluations of one's preferred party are expected have a strong demotivating influence on citizens.

In popular interview narratives many citizens expressing intense political distrust towards their political system also expressed the intention of somehow removing themselves from the citizen-state relation and severing ties with the political collective, not only by not voting, but also by moving away from the country. This is certainly an extreme reaction and as such it provides a harder test for the reach of distrusting attitudes in influencing citizen behaviour. Given the gravity of such an action, distrust attitudes would need to be strong and pervasive to the entire political system and its central institutions in order to motivate considerations of leaving the country.

We also investigate the association between distrusting attitudes and active political participation, especially the intention of participating in a peaceful demonstration. Expectations are harder to formulate for this type of political behaviour, since theoretically the association might be running in either a negative or positive direction. Perceptions of political untrustworthiness can motivate citizens to protest and attempt to make their voice heard through peaceful channels, while at the same time we could argue that distrust may have a demotivating effect and lead citizens to shy away from any type of participation. Gamson's distrusting-efficacious hypothesis posits that among the politically efficacious, perceptions of untrustworthiness will have a motivating effect; however, as seen in the previous section, feelings of efficacy diminish distrusting attitudes. We could expect different motivation mechanisms to be at play given negative attitudes towards different parts of the political system. Negative evaluations of one's preferred party are expected to demotivate participation through elections, given the partisan character of the electoral contest. Similarly, we can expect distrust of one's preferred party to have a demotivating effect on other aspects of active participation, such as demonstrating in a peaceful manner. Political parties are considered by many citizens as aggregators of political interests and coordinators of political action; hence a citizen that considers even the party closest to their preferences to be untrustworthy would also be less likely to participate actively in politics. On the other hand, we could argue that certain negative evaluations of the political system could have a motivating influence for citizens to demonstrate. Along this line of thinking, perceptions of political untrustworthiness stemming from unethical and unfair political practices can be expected to have a positive effect on a citizen's consideration to participate in a demonstration, firstly, because moral evaluations reflect a more intense level of distrusting attitudes as seen in the preceding chapter, and secondly, because political action and demonstration is often associated with ethically charged issues (such as inequality, social welfare, war, human and minority rights).

Table 6.6: Bivariate correlations of distrust indices with behavioural intentions

	Distrust Parliament Index	Distrust Preferred Political Party Index	Political Distrust Index	Single Item Trust British Parliament
Behavioural Intention Variables				
Active Participation	.031	-.153*	-.068	.030
Disruptive Participation	.100*	.084*	.104*	-.198*
Abstain	.065	.213*	.156*	-.154*
Vote Radical	.102*	-.053*	.029*	-.134*
Leave UK	.121*	.055	.100*	-.203*
Peaceful Demonstration	.083*	-.073*	.007	-.076*

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients, N=785, *p<.05.*

Table 6.6 above shows the bivariate correlations between the distrust indices and the aforementioned political behaviour variables.[56] We also include the single traditional trust in parliament item to inspect how our new distrust indices compare in their associations with behavioural intentions. Items capturing active political participation are associated more strongly with the distrust in preferred party index than the single item capturing trust, or the distrust in parliament index. Moreover, as expected the association is negative, denoting that increased distrust in one's preferred party demotivates active participation in politics through peaceful demonstrations, participating in political pressure groups, NGOs or parties. The likelihood of participating in a peaceful demonstration, as seen by the separate item, is inhibited by distrust in one's preferred political party, though distrust in parliament has a small (and significant) positive effect. In other words, we can see both the motivating and demotivating mechanisms of political distrust at play. Being able to identify with a political group and trust your preferred party makes you more likely to consider participating in a peaceful demonstration and participate in the political process to make your voice heard. In the case of higher level institutions such as the national parliament, attitudes of distrust act as a motivating factor for demonstrating within the democratic framework. The effect is no longer statistically significant when controlling for citizen demographic characteristics (Table

[56] All bivariate associations with behavioural intentions items were also calculated using Kendall's tau correlation given that these items are measured on a four-point scale. The results do not differ to the associations calculated using Pearson's r correlation and we report the latter for reasons of consistency.

6.8), yet including political efficacy in the controls yields again a positive and significant effect for distrusting attitudes. We believe this provides some evidence in favour of the motivating effect of distrusting attitudes on intentions to demonstrate.[57]

The index capturing intentions of disruptive political behaviour is associated more strongly with the single item tapping into political trust than our distrust indices, and so does the item referring to considering leaving the country. It seems that when it comes to the most radical decision of removing oneself from the political collective, the single item asking respondents directly how much they trust their parliament is a better predictor of such considerations than asking respondents to evaluate political targets along multiple lines. There is still a positive association between political distrust and considering leaving the country, driven by distrust attitudes towards the national parliament. As expected, distrust of one's preferred political party is not a strong motivator for such a ground-breaking political decision.

Nevertheless, in the case of considerations to abstain from the electoral process, the political distrust index is a better predictor than the trust in parliament item. The associations are all in the expected direction, driven mainly by negative perceptions of one's preferred political party. As expected, we see that negative perceptions of one's preferred political party make citizens more likely both to refrain from expressing electoral support for that or any other political party and to abstain. Perceiving your political system as untrustworthy in general increases your likelihood to consider electoral abstention. Although we do not find a statistically significant association between negative evaluations of national parliament and the intention to abstain, regression results presented in Table 6.8 below show that both distrust increase the likelihood respondents will consider electoral abstention and both effects are statistically significant.

The intention to vote for a radical or extreme party is also associated with political distrust in the hypothesised way: perceptions of national parliament and the political system as untrustworthy increase the likelihood that respondents will consider voting for a radical political party. The effect is complicated somewhat in the case of distrust towards one's preferred political party, simply because supporters of radical political parties tend to evaluate their party in a very positive manner. Even in the limited multi-party context of the

[57] Controlling for levels of political efficacy, we can see that the positive relationship between distrust in national parliament and active political participation reaches statistical significance at the 5% level (also for attending a peaceful demonstration). The effect of distrust in preferred party remains negative and significant, although reduces in magnitude.

UK party system,[58] voters can choose to support radical or anti-systemic political parties, such as the British National Party (BNP), the UK Independence Party (UKIP) or smaller single issue parties, such as RESPECT. One can also think of equivalent political parties in Europe, both on the extremes of the political spectrum and radical in the sense of promoting an anti-systemic agenda. In the popular narratives presented in Chapter 4, the extreme Lega Nord (LN) and radical Five Star Movement (M5S) were mentioned by various participants in Italy, and the extreme-right Golden Dawn (GD) and radical coalition of the left (SYRIZA) were brought up in citizen accounts in Greece. In our sample, distrust in one's preferred party is weak, but negatively correlated to considerations of supporting a radical party; however the association disappears once we control for key respondent demographics and ideology (Table 6.8).

[58] For a discussion on the transformation of the UK party system following the 2010 election see Kavanagh and Cowley (2010).

Table 6.7: Regressions explaining behavioural intentions using political distrust indices

Independent Variables	Distrust in Parliament Index		Distrust in Preferred Party Index		Political Distrust Index	
Dependent Variables	Model I Active Participation	Model II Disruptive Participation	Model III Active Participation	Model IV Disruptive Participation	Model V Active Participation	Model VI Disruptive Participation
Distrust Parliament Index	.002	.015***				
	(.005)	(.004)				
Distrust Preferred Political Party Index			-.027***	.008		
			(.005)	(.004)		
Political Distrust Index					-.017***	.015***
					(.006)	(.005)
Controls						
Left-Right Ideology	.013***	.004	-.016***	.002	-.016***	.004
	(.003)	(.002)	(.003)	(.002)	(.003)	(.002)
2. Middle level Education	.024	.009	.024	.009	.024	-.009
	(.019)	(.015)	(.018)	(.016)	(.018)	(.015)
3. Higher Level Education *(ref.cat. Low Educ)*	.033	.017	.03	.017	.031*	-.017
	(.02)	(.016)	(.019)	(.016)	(.019)	(.016)
Age	.001	.003***	.001	.003***	-.0004	-.003***
	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.0003)	(.0003)
Male	.023	.038***	.021	.041***	-.0155***	.004
	(.012)	(.010)	(.011)	(.010)	(.003)	(.002)
Constant	.618***	.457***	.744***	.496***	.703***	.461***
	(.036)	(.031)	(.035)	(.03)	(.039)	(.032)
R-squared	.040	.144	.078	.133	.052	.140

*Note: OLS regression analysis, entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.10.*

Table 6.8: Binary Logistic Regression for behavioural intentions using distrust of parliament and distrust of preferred party indices

Independent Variables	Distrust in Parliament Index				Distrust in Preferred Party Index			
Dependent Variables	Model I Abstain	Model II Vote Radical	Model I Leave the UK	Model II Peaceful Demo	Model I Abstain	Model II Vote Radical	Model I Leave the UK	Model II Peaceful Demo
Distrust Parliament Index	1.203**	1.210***	1.283***	1.053				
	(.11)	(.09)	(.10)	(.07)				
Distrust Preferred Political Party Index					1.461***	.891	1.044	.799***
					(.13)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)
Controls								
Left-Right Ideology	1.014	1.129***	1.049	.857***	1.023	1.086*	1.018	.833***
	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.03)
2. Middle level Education	.771	1.275	1.26	1.377	.754	1.265	1.238	1.384
	(.25)	(.37)	(.42)	(.37)	(.24)	(.36)	(.41)	(.38)
3. Higher Level Education	.525*	1.138	1.339	1.621*	.527*	1.093	1.289	1.586*
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.18)	(.34)	(.45)	(.45)	(.18)	(.32)	(.43)	(.44)
Age	.952***	.985***	.962***	.989**	.953***	.986***	.965***	.988**
	(.007)	(.005)	(.006)	(.005)	(.007)	(.005)	(.006)	(.005)
Male	1.032	2.318***	1.844***	1.26	1.059	2.363***	1.902***	1.256
	(.21)	(.42)	(.36)	(.20)	(.22)	(.42)	(.37)	(.20)
Constant	.987	.0742***	.199***	.889	.467	.319**	.546	3.08**
	(.63)	(.04)	(.12)	(.47)	.291	.174	.323	(1.6)
Pseudo R-squared	.087	.049	.072	.032	.108	.043	.060	.042

*Note: Binary logistic regression analysis, entries are Odds Ratios. Standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.10.*

Tables 6.7 and 6.8 above use the distrust indices to explain active and disruptive political participation, as well as intentions to abstain, vote for a radical party, leave the UK and attend a peaceful demonstration. We look at the partial associations controlling for citizen demographic characteristics that are associated with political behaviour (age, gender and level of education), in addition to ideological self-placement on a left-right spectrum.[59] The overall picture is clear: political distrust has a demotivating effect on active participation, driven mainly by the effect of distrust in one's preferred political party, while it has a motivating effect on disruptive political behaviour, driven mainly by attitudes of distrust towards national parliament. Most behavioural items are either explained by distrust in national parliament or by distrust of preferred party, apart from abstaining in a general election, where both distrust of national parliament and of one's preferred party increase the likelihood of considering such an action.

Not all evaluative dimensions however are equally telling. As the next step, we disaggregate the distrust indices and look at the effect each distrust item has on respondents' behavioural intentions. Table 6.9 below presents bivariate association measures, while the following tables 6.10-6.13 present regression coefficients for each evaluative item explaining behavioural intentions, controlling for demographic characteristics and ideology. We can see that for evaluations of national parliament, both retrospective and prospective assessments of diverging interests are not enough to motivate intentions of disruptive political behaviour. In the preceding chapter we noted that interest-based evaluations provide the easiest evaluative dimension for respondents to register distrust. The belief that national parliament has acted and is also likely to act in a manner that is not in accordance with citizens' best-interest is not sufficient to make them consider abstaining in an election, voting for a radical party or leaving the country.

On the contrary, the belief that parliament is acting in an incompetent and immoral manner has a significant effect on behavioural intentions and we can see that retrospective perceptions of untrustworthiness have a stronger effect than prospective perceptions. This

[59] We decided to include left-right ideology as a control given the nature of the dependent variables. Ideology is expected to influence considerations regarding electoral behaviour as well as types of political participation, such as demonstrating. The substantive results of our analysis are not changed in any significant way whether we include or exclude left-right ideology; nevertheless, we are interested in the effect of distrusting attitudes independent of political ideology and hence choose the model that includes ideological self-placement as a control.

provides a more optimistic image for analysts of citizens' behaviour. As long as the political class and major representative institution does not violate shared democratic norms and does not show incompetence in managing technical political issues, citizens are less likely to consider engaging in disruptive types of political participation. Perceptions of incongruent interests between the citizen and the national parliament do not provide a motivation for the citizen to consider electoral abstention, voting for a radical party or leaving the country. Respondents in our sample appear to understand that when it comes to a representative political institution that includes all of society's preferences, perceptions of untrustworthiness based on incongruent interests can be accepted more easily and would not drive them to disruptive types of political action. Perceptions of incongruent interests may motivate active participation through demonstration, along with ethical assessments, but not anti-systemic action.

Evaluative items of preferred political party show a uniform negative association with intentions of participating in politics in an active way (somewhat stronger for prospective items). Negative attitudes towards one's preferred political party have a demotivating effect on the intention to demonstrate driven by negative prospective expectations along moral and interest-based dimensions. Of course, it is important to note that the strength of the associations between attitudes of distrust and measures of behavioural intentions are rather weak. The challenges of linking attitudes to behaviour in social science research are numerous and discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of this thesis. In the context of this survey we have relied solely on the respondents' self-declared likelihood of acting in certain ways, capturing only behavioural intentions and not realised behaviour. This makes the interpretation of our findings straightforward and methodologically less complex, but of course fails to provide the elusive link to the ultimate measure of interest: citizens' actual behaviour. Measures of behavioural intention are the next best alternative for our purposes in the context of a single survey; however the associations found should not be exaggerated. The limited amount of behavioural intentions variance explained by the distrust items also serves as a reminder of the limited strength of attitudes in motivating even considerations for specific actions (explaining between 13-14% of variance in responses concerning disruptive political participation and 1-4% in active political participation).

Table 6.9: Bivariate correlations of distrust items with behavioural intentions

	Active Participation Index	Disruptive Participation Index	Abstaining in Election	Voting for Radical Party	Leaving the UK	Attending Peaceful Demo
Distrust of National Parliament						
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.014	.106*	.051	.108*	.153*	.043
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.048	.125*	.092*	.093*	.107*	.076*
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.024	.030	.005	.070	.066	.057
Parliament Technical Prospective	.027	.107*	.086*	.078*	.116*	.064
Parliament Moral Prospective	.037	.094*	.062	.100*	.116*	.100*
Parliament Interest Prospective	.006	.039	.025	.066	.048	.076*
Distrust of Preferred Political Party						
Party Technical Retrospective	-.083*	.104*	.187*	-.006	.048	-.023
Party Moral Retrospective	-.105*	.066	.185*	-.043	.030	-.042
Party Interest Retrospective	-.120*	.065	.187*	-.043	.025	-.065
Party Technical Prospective	-.141*	.082*	.178*	-.050	.080*	-.062
Party Moral Prospective	-.171*	.050	.174*	-.088*	.056	-.096*
Party Interest Prospective	-.161*	.062	.175*	-.051	.040	-.080*

*Note: Entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients, N=785, *p<.05.*

Table 6.10: Regression coefficients for distrust in parliament items explaining active and disruptive political participation

Dependent Variable:	Active Participation	Disruptive Participation
Independent Variables		
Parliament Technical Retrospective	-.0005	.012***
	(.004)	(.003)
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.001	.014***
	(.004)	(.003)
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.0003	.007
	(.004)	(.003)
Parliament Technical Prospective	-.0002	.011***
	(.004)	(.003)
Parliament Moral Prospective	.002	.010***
	(.004)	(.004)
Parliament Interest Prospective	.001	.006
	(.004)	(.004)
Controls		
Left-Right Ideology		
Level of Education		
Age		
Gender		

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05. Full OLS regression models presented in Tables 6.10.1-2 in Appendix I.*

Table 6.11: Regression coefficients for distrust in preferred party items explaining active and disruptive political participation

Dependent Variable:	Active Participation	Disruptive Participation
Independent Variables		
Party Technical Retrospective	-.014***	.011***
	(.004)	(.003)
Party Moral Retrospective	-.017***	.008**
	(.004)	(.004)
Party Interest Retrospective	-.018***	.005
	(.00405)	(.003)
Party Technical Prospective	-.021***	.006
	(.004)	(.004)
Party Moral Prospective	-.024***	.003
	(.004)	(.003)
Party Interest Prospective	-.024***	.002
	(.004)	(.004)
Controls		
Left-Right Ideology		
Level of Education		
Age		
Gender		

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05. Full OLS regression models presented in Tables 6.11.1-2 in Appendix I.*

Table 6.12: Odds ratios from binary logistic regression for distrust in parliament items explaining behavioural intentions

Dependent Variable:	Model 1 Abstain	Model 2 Vote Radical	Model 3 Leaving UK	Model 4 Peaceful Demo
Independent Variables				
Parliament Technical	1.093	1.197***	1.300***	.992
Retrospective	(.08)	(.07)	(.09)	(.06)
Parliament Moral	1.206***	1.124**	1.198***	1.015
Retrospective	(.08)	(.06)	(.08)	(.06)
Parliament Interest	1.029	1.173***	1.137	1.039
Retrospective	(.07)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)
Parliament Technical	1.205**	1.128**	1.188**	1.021
Prospective	(.0)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)
Parliament Moral	1.166**	1.125**	1.193***	1.090
Prospective	(.08)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)
Parliament Interest	1.121	1.105	1.110	1.063
Prospective	(.09)	(.07)	(.08)	(.06)
Controls				
Left-Right Ideology				
Level of Education				
Age				
Gender				

*Note: Entries are Odds Ratios. Standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05. Full binary logistic regression results presented in Tables 6.12.1-4 in Appendix I.*

Table 6.13: Odds Ratios from binary logistic regression for distrust in preferred party items explaining behavioural intentions

Dependent Variable:	Model 1 Abstain	Model 2 Vote Radical	Model 3 Leaving UK	Model 4 Peaceful Demo
Independent Variables				
Party Technical Retrospective	1.376*** (.10)	.1.025 (.06)	1.042 (.07)	.883** (.03)
Party Moral Retrospective	1.358*** (.10)	.963 (.06)	1.016 (.07)	.869** (.05)
arty Interest Retrospective	1.338*** (.10)	.97 (.06)	.981 (.06)	.859*** (.05)
Party Technical Prospective	1.301*** (.10)	.890 (.06)	1.12 (.08)	.857** (.05)
Party Moral Prospective	1.270*** (.10)	.828*** (.05)	1.045 (.07)	.814*** (.05)
Party Interest Prospective	1.264*** (.10)	.863** (.05)	.996 (.07)	.830*** (.02)
Controls				
Left-Right Ideology				
Level of Education				
Age				
Gender				

*Note: Entries are Odds Ratios. Standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05. Full binary logistic regression results presented in Tables 6.13.1-4 in Appendix I.*

In summary, this analysis indicated there are important differences in the ways distrusting judgments motivate various types of behavioural intentions. Most importantly, we noted that distrust attitudes directed at national parliament can help explain behavioural intentions of disruptive political participation and that the effects are driven primarily by perceptions of past technical failure and past unethical conduct. Perceptions of incongruent interests, although an integral part of distrusting political attitudes, are not enough to push citizens to consider such actions. Only in the case of radical party voting did retrospective perceptions of incongruent interests have a significant effect, with more negative evaluations increasing the likelihood of considering such action.

While we were not able to provide conclusive evidence on the motivating effect of distrusting attitudes on the intention to participate in politics in an active manner, we did find some significant associations between moral and interest-based negative evaluations of national parliament and considerations of attending a peaceful demonstration. Therefore, we can

tentatively argue that citizens' intention to participate in politics in an active way by joining a demonstration, pressure group, NGO or political party may indeed be boosted by their dissatisfaction on political matters. Feeling passionate about political issues or disagreeing with the normative stance of the political system can motivate citizens to engage in social and political action. The likelihood of doing so, however, clearly decreases as citizens distrust their preferred political party. At least for our UK sample, we can argue that citizens still use the political party closest to their preference as a link to the political system and guide to political participation. A citizen that fails to identify a political party he can support and considers even the party closest to his preferences to be untrustworthy is not likely to use democratic processes to voice his frustration.

Distrusting attitudes targeted at a citizen's preferred party may not motivate citizens to consider extreme action, such as moving away from the country, but negative evaluations lead citizens to shy away from the electoral process and active participation. In fact, we can see that distrust of one's party based on negative technical and ethical assessments of past conduct can motivate disruptive political behaviour and lead citizens away from democratic processes. In this sense, both political targets have an active role to play in motivating citizens to engage with politics in a constructive way. Overall, attitudes of political distrust motivate disruptive political participation and demotivate active political participation (Table 6.7). Hence, though our analysis has provided an insight into the relative strength of each evaluative dimension in motivating predispositions for political action, as well as the different effect of distrusting attitudes towards separate objects within the political system, it is important to bear also in mind the overall links of distrust to behavioural intentions.

6.3 Investigating the distrust heuristic

So far in this chapter we have investigated whether our new measures of political distrust can help us advance our understanding of how distrust judgments function, by looking at the measures' associations with external variables of interest. We have seen that distrusting evaluations of national parliament are influenced by a host of other attitudes and characteristics in slightly different ways than distrusting evaluations of preferred political party, and that these evaluations also help predict respondents' behavioural intention with

different degrees of success. In addition, we have identified differences in the way each evaluative dimension is associated with external variables, offering more fine-grained explanations for the link between distrusting attitudes and political behaviour.

As a final empirical analysis, we examine more closely respondents whose attitudes are formulated primarily via a distrust heuristic process. Given the theoretical basis and empirical evidence provided for political distrust acting as a heuristic mechanism, we look for significant differences between those respondents who invariably give completely untrustworthy assessments of their preferred political party and national parliament, and those who evaluate these political objects in a critical, but not absolutely negative manner along all evaluative dimensions. The latent class analysis carried out in the preceding chapter pointed to the existence of a smaller group of respondents who would consistently choose extreme distrusting evaluations. If we consider those respondents to be forming their assessment under a predefined predisposition of political distrust, which leaves no space for considering the different evaluative dimensions, time projections or political target each item inquires about, then this could be an indicator of people who rely more heavily on a distrust. It characterises an easily accessible attitude that places more emphasis on 'gut-feeling' rather than instigating cognitive processing anew (Hetherington, 1998). We can observe the workings on the heuristic process in the group of actively distrusting citizens for whom political distrust has taken over and overrides any specific assessments of political agents.

Our multi-item measures of political distrust, which include not only two different political targets but also separate dimensions for evaluating each target, offer the possibility of identifying this respondent group and testing whether it is significantly different from other critical and distrusting respondents. We therefore keep only respondents who denote overall political distrust (with overall scores on the political distrust index above 4.0) and identify that group of respondents who opt for extremely untrustworthy assessments of parliament and their political party in every single manifest item. This leaves us with a small number of respondents, 21 people out of a group of 360. Despite the small number of respondents and the fact that we are comparing them to respondents who also give negative assessments to the two political objects, we find some very interesting differences between these two groups. The group of active distrusters has a significantly lower political knowledge score (mean=.49

compared to mean=.64 on a 0-1 scale, p<.05) and different educational composition.[60] For the first time we find a significant effect of education level; the extremely distrusting group is comprised of more people from the middle education category and less from the higher education category than the rest of the respondents (chi2=8.2, p<.05). There are no significant differences in terms of age and gender, although we do find more men being part of the actively distrusting respondents (chi2=3.2, p<.10). Finally, we also find differences in the level of democratic satisfaction and consideration of disruptive political behaviour. Actively distrusting respondents are on average much more dissatisfied by the way democracy works in their country (mean=1.6 compared to mean=3.0 on a 1-7 scale, p<.05) and more likely to consider engaging in disruptive political behaviour (mean=.48 compared to mean=.41 on a 0-1 scale, although the significance of that difference disappears when considering the unequal variances for the two groups). Specifically, they are much more likely to consider abstaining from elections (chi2=12.0, p<.05) and more likely to consider leaving the country (chi2=3.7, p<.10).

Finding any differences given the small number of respondents suggests there is truly something particular about those people for whom an overall distrusting attitude has taken over and guides all evaluations for both political objects. One might argue that this is not the most stringent test for the distrust heuristic, since we include distrusting attitudes towards a political agent that could be identified by respondents as the political group closest to their beliefs and most likely to promote their preferences. Surely, the people who completely distrust even such a group would be driven by a very powerful negative affect towards politics. Therefore, it would be better to repeat the test, this time using only distrust in the institutional level, identifying those respondents that register completely untrustworthy assessments of national parliament across all evaluative dimensions and time projections. We compare this group of 68 respondents with the 458 in our sample who still register overall untrustworthy evaluations of parliament but arrive at this score through a combination of responses. We find significant differences among the two groups in terms of their satisfaction with democracy (mean=1.9 compared to mean=3.3 on a 1-7 scale, p<.01) and strength of identification with the UK (mean=4.8 compared to mean=5.4 on a 1-7 scale, p<.01), although we do not find any significant differences in terms of the political knowledge scores. More interestingly, respondents in this group of complete distrust are significantly more likely to

[60] We assume unequal variances for these analyses.

consider engaging in disruptive behaviour (mean=4.9 compared to mean=4.0 on a 0-1 scale, p<.01), more likely on average to consider abstaining in an election (chi2=6.40, p<.05), to consider voting for a radical party (chi2=8.42=, p<.01) and to consider leaving the country (chi2=9.02, p<.01). These differences show how complete distrust of national parliament (distrust at the institutional level) is an extremely powerful motivator even compared to moderate distrusting and sceptical attitudes. In that respect, it seems that people who distrust the institutional level across both time projections and make no differentiations between competence, ethical standing and interest-congruence – probably guided by a distrust heuristic to help them make quick evaluations across the board – are also more likely to consider actions that do not contribute to mainstream political processes.

6.4 Discussion of the new measures' contribution and conclusion

This was the second chapter based on the statistical analysis of the new measurement of political distrust tested using UK survey data and the final empirical chapter of this thesis. Its aim was to examine associations between attitudes of political distrust, as these are captured through the new evaluative items, and other citizen characteristics, attitudes and behavioural intentions regarding political participation. It first presented an analysis of the associations with other political attitudes and citizen characteristics before considering the relation between distrusting attitudes and citizen political behaviour, and finally taking a closer look at distrusting attitudes shaped through the heuristic process. Throughout this analysis, we used not only the aggregate political distrust index, but also distrust indices for each political object. In the preceding chapter, multivariate analysis of all manifest items led to the conclusion that distrusting attitudes towards the two political targets measured in the survey tapped into a single latent political distrust attitude, but that they could also be examined separately, as two strongly correlated individual evaluations. In order to advance our understanding of distrust formation and its links to other attitudes and behaviour, we have examined the two indicators separately and further disaggregated them into the individual evaluative items.

Using the two separate indices for national parliament and preferred political party, we determined that attitudes of distrust directed towards different parts of the political system

can be associated with citizen characteristics in different ways and can vary in their power to explain certain citizen behaviours that are interesting for political scientists. Specifically we saw that levels of political cynicism are more strongly associated with distrust at the institutional level than distrust of a partisan political target perceived to be closer to the citizen. This suggests that, although no part of the political system is immune to an overall cynical worldview, evaluations of political agents that represent citizens' preferred subcomponent of the political system, such as smaller groups of politicians and partisan groups are not influenced as much by such cynical predispositions. On the other hand, feelings of political efficacy contributed more to explanations of distrust in one's preferred political party than in national parliament. The politically efficacious are more likely to report positive evaluations of national parliament and of their preferred political party. Yet not all association patterns were as clearly discernible and easy to interpret as the ones mentioned above. The trickiest, in the case of confounding traits, was political knowledge. The dual possible association between levels of political knowledge and distrust was explicated in the first section of this chapter. We found evidence for both of these processes in our analysis, where increased political knowledge scores were associated with trusting and distrusting attitudes at the same time, pointing to the possibility of a non-linear association.

The nature of the associations we investigated in this chapter is not specified as a causal relationship. This was mentioned in earlier sections of this chapter, but it is important to mention again for reasons of methodological and scientific precision. In the first section of this chapter we considered measures of political attitudes and citizen characteristics that are expected to be associated with attitudes of political distrust in a theoretically interesting and substantive way. For many of these variables, such as cynicism, efficacy and even political knowledge, the direction of influence can be argued to run both to and from political distrust. Nevertheless, we are interested in determining the associations and partial associations between all these measures and the subcomponents of distrusting attitudes to advance our understanding of how each evaluation of untrustworthiness operates.

Furthermore, in the second section of this chapter we investigated the power of distrusting judgments in shaping behavioural intentions. The main purpose of this chapter was not to determine the effects of distrusting attitudes on political behaviour. Such an endeavour, although important and informative, would largely sit outside the scope of this thesis. The main purpose of this chapter has been to provide an additional contribution to our

understanding of how assessments of untrustworthiness function, based on the conceptual model advanced by the thesis. The fact that citizen distrust at different levels of the political system and of different political objects can motivate distinct behavioural considerations, or follow different patterns given the level of political information and knowledge, explains some of the complexities political science research has been facing in this field. Even in the limited space of a non-representative sample from one Western democracy, we have identified both motivating and demotivating effects of distrusting attitudes and the relative strength of certain evaluative dimensions in motivating different types of behavioural intentions. Crucially, we have seen yet again that perceptions of unethical political conducts are a critical aspect of distrusting attitudes also in the way these motivate people's considerations for future action. Our conceptual model of political distrust has not only been put to the test empirically through the analysis the last two chapters, but also supplemented with additional information regarding the role of its components in the study of citizen's political behaviour.

Exploratory qualitative work helped inform the conceptual model of distrust and create the manifest items measuring the latent distrusting attitudes. In the preceding chapter we provided an analysis of these evaluative items and argued that two processes appear to be at play in the formation of distrusting attitudes: one process of evaluating each aspect of the political system along distinct evaluative dimensions based on prospective and retrospective indications of political conduct, and a heuristic process where overall levels of distrust act as a cognitive shortcut for all assessments of political agents. In this chapter we attempted to find some evidence of this distrust heuristic, noting that respondents who give extremely distrusting evaluations of political agents without differentiating across dimensions and time projections can be separated from other distrusting respondents on the basis of characteristics, other attitudes and behavioural intentions. Citizen narratives highlighted how extreme distrust often entails a breaking point in the citizen-state relation and how perceptions of untrustworthiness come to colour all new information regarding political agents, making it very difficult to break the cycle of distrust. We have mentioned already that the cyclicality of political distrust attitudes is extremely difficult to capture empirically, but we believe we have been able to find some traces of this heuristic, by identifying respondents in our sample who record extreme distrust in all survey items. Further research could delve deeper to investigate the precise heuristic mechanism and examine the status of those actively

distrusting respondents, as well as the possibilities for reversing distrust and breaking the vicious cycle.

Chapter 7: Discussion of the Thesis' Contribution and Concluding Remarks

7.1 Discussing key findings
7.2 Contribution of the conceptual model and survey measure of distrusting attitudes: Implications for future research
7.3 Concluding remarks

The aim of this concluding chapter is to provide a brief summary of the key findings of the thesis and situate them in the general academic debate surrounding political distrust. We take this opportunity to discuss the wider implications of this thesis, both conceptually and empirically, and the way it relates to existing work on citizen attitudes of political distrust. We revisit the conceptual model of distrust advanced throughout the thesis, highlight its key aspects and suggest possible avenues for further fruitful research in this field. In addition, after considering the arguments made and evidence gathered throughout this thesis, we re-evaluate the relationship between political trust and distrust and reaffirm the necessity of further social science research that focuses on distrusting political attitudes. We conclude with a consideration of the limitations of this doctoral research, the ways in which it contributes to academic knowledge, as well as its practical relevance for democratic politics and the health of democratic systems.

7.1 Discussing key findings

We began our investigation into distrusting political attitudes by reviewing the most promising analytical approaches and supplementing them with exploratory qualitative work aimed at unveiling the meaning citizens attribute to judgments of political distrust. Political distrust is defined as an individual attitude that entails perceptions of an untrustworthy political system and is relevant for citizens' subsequent stance and action. The conceptual model of political distrust developed through this research emphasises the relational and dynamic aspect of distrusting attitudes. The relational aspect is derived from the fact that political distrust characterises a relationship between the citizen and the state or its actors (institutions, politicians, political processes), while the dynamic nature of distrusting attitudes

captures the retrospective and prospective assessments of untrustworthiness entailed in citizens' expressions of distrust.

We emphasise that, as an attitude, political distrust is evaluative in character. Citizens' explanations of their negative evaluations are often tautological, describing distrust in terms of the untrustworthiness of political agents. Yet following our analysis, we identify three types of evaluative dimensions that underpin citizen perceptions of untrustworthiness: assessments of technical failure and incompetence, assessments of unethical conduct and unfair outcomes, and assessments of incongruent interests between the citizen and political agents. When citizens claim to distrust politicians, institutions and the political system as a whole, they express a judgment of political untrustworthiness, retrospective or prospective, along one or a combination of these evaluative dimensions.

The meaning political distrust assumes for these citizens is one of negative and unwanted outcomes derived from interactions with the political system or its agents. This places distrust in stark contrast with trust and its absence (the lack of trust), which can only denote the belief in positive outcomes and the lack of such a belief. Lack of trust in a political agent, institution or system implies limited conviction or ambivalence about the trustworthy qualities of the political targets. Distrust, on the other hand, indicates some form of certainty. However, this certainty refers to the probability of harmful outcomes, and it gives rise to particular behavioural and emotional states for citizens in an effort to protect themselves from the negative consequences of interactions with the state. These may include disbelief, to protect oneself from betrayal, not interacting with political agents, severing of the political bonds between citizen and the system by not participating in elections, not contributing to the state through taxation and not adhering to laws, or completely removing oneself from the reach of the political system by moving out of the community. As this latter behavioural intention is quite extreme, and most often citizens' lives continue to be impacted in numerous ways by untrustworthy political authorities, subsequent behaviour reinforces distrusting attitudes in a cyclical manner. This, we have argued, is an important difference between relations of political distrust compared to generic distrusting attitudes (interpersonal or others): in the latter case interaction between free agents will be abandoned and cooperation will not take place, while in the former, citizens may still be forced to interact with a political system they perceive as untrustworthy and their behaviour will most likely enhance untrustworthiness.

This conceptualisation of distrusting political attitudes further highlights the importance of the behavioural intentions they motivate and the process through which they function. We traced two simultaneous modes of operation of distrusting attitudes and found evidence to support this interpretation through qualitative and quantitative empirical analysis. On the one hand, political distrust is dynamic, linked to citizens' experiences and their evaluations of political actors along the three dimensions mentioned above. Information can be updated and perceptions can change, hence political distrust (if it is not complete and has not resulted in a total rupture between the citizen and the state) can potentially be reversed. Yet at the same time, attitudes of distrust can act as cognitive shortcuts for citizens. It would be unrealistic to assume that for every instance a citizen needs to decide how to navigate his daily socio-political life he engages in a detailed cognitive and affective evaluation of political actors and institutions of the political system. In fact, one of the reasons why distrusting attitudes are considered powerful and significant in the study of political behaviour is because of this 'rule of thumb' function they appear to have in shaping subsequent perceptions and actions. Therefore, even though distrust is evaluation-based it also influences political evaluations as a cognitive shortcut.

We argue that this double function of distrusting political attitudes helps illuminate two contentious points. The first has to do with the dimensionality of political distrust and whether it is more appropriate to consider distrust as a multi-dimensional or uni-dimensional latent concept (Fisher et al., 2010; Hooghe, 2011). Empirical analysis and quantitative findings showed that the various evaluations tap into a single latent notion and that citizens' perceptions of untrustworthiness tend to follow similar lines when forming retrospective and prospective assessments for different parts of the political system. Although there are some differences between specific evaluations, we can see that answers are to a large extent motivated by a single overarching attitude of political distrust. Therefore, distrusting attitudes can be thought of as uni-dimensional, and even if we decide to consider citizens' distrust towards different parts of the political system separately (in our study, distrust of national parliament and distrust of preferred political party), it is important to note that these are not independent attitudes. Our analysis showed that it is also possible to speak of separate distrusting evaluations, and that we can gain additional insights into the nature of distrust itself and the way it influences other attitudes and behaviour by considering its various components. In this way, our research is driving the debate further away from strict discussions of dimensionality and the impasses resulting from theoretical distinctions of

specific and diffuse evaluations, and more towards a discussion surrounding the operation of distrusting attitudes.

The second point has to do with the contested relation between political distrust and cynicism. From its outset, this thesis has attempted to clarify the concept of political distrust and separate it from competing notions, such as cynicism. The aforementioned aspects highlighted by our conceptual model of distrusting attitudes – its relational, dynamic nature and dual function – set it apart more clearly from the notion of political cynicism, which is a deeply held belief regarding the inherent evilness of all political authorities and power institutions. Cynicism is not sensitive to perceptions, information and experiences in the same way as distrust is, it does not follow the same lines of evaluation prospectively and retrospectively and it does not share this dual function of political distrust. Without a doubt, strongly cynical citizens are likely to be highly distrusting of political institutions and politicians and use this attitude more often as a shortcut rather than engage in new assessments of political targets. However, politically distrusting citizens are not necessarily cynics. It is important to separate the two notions conceptually and we hope that this thesis's focus on investigating distrusting attitudes has helped clarify their differences.

The empirical exploratory research conducted in three European democracies helped formulate the conceptual model of political distrust and provided additional information to address questions regarding citizens' distrust. For example, we saw that citizens felt free to express distrust in various parts of their political system; not just figures, politicians or institutions, but also processes and the system in its entirety. It was also possible to investigate how people perceive political institutions and trace how their perceptions of distrust can spill over 'upwards', 'downwards' or be ring-fenced through their evaluation of new evidence, although we would argue that further research would be needed to determine the precise point where overall political distrust sets in.

An aspect of distrusting attitudes we investigate further through the new survey evidence was the internal structure of the evaluative dimensions that underpin distrust. In addition to the dimensionality and internal consistency of the novel indicator, we also explore the different ways in which citizens form assessments of political untrustworthiness. Our analysis points to the fact that perceptions of untrustworthiness based on ethical considerations appear to be more prevalent and better positioned to capture stronger distrust than technical and interest-

based evaluations in the case of a system's key political institution. The ethical dimension of distrusting attitudes that surfaced clearly from citizen narrative accounts of political distrust was further highlighted by our statistical analysis in Chapters 5 and 6. In fact, examining the motivational effect of the different aspects of distrust for behavioural considerations, we saw that ethical and technical-based perceptions of untrustworthiness can motivate intentions of political action that are disruptive for democratic political processes, such as abstaining from elections, voting for radical or anti-systemic parties or leaving the country. Whereas all three evaluative dimensions of political targets represent integral parts of political distrust, political conduct that is perceived to violate shared norms of fairness and justice may very well be the first point governments and practitioners of institutional reforms should address, in an effort to reverse widespread citizen distrust.

The different aspects of distrusting political judgments and citizen orientations towards two subcomponents of the political system shed some light on the way in which political distrust is associated with other political attitudes and behavioural intentions. Although we only find small variations in the influence of political attitudes and individual-level characteristics on distrusting orientations to national parliament and to one's political party, we are able to trace the simultaneous motivating and demotivating effects of distrusting attitudes on behavioural intentions. We find that intentions of political action that can be considered damaging for political processes, such as abstaining, voting for radical parties, engaging in violent demonstrations and even removing oneself from the political community, can be motivated by distrust in the country's key representative political institution. With the exception of electoral abstention, distrust in one's preferred party does not appear relevant or strong enough to motivate such political actions. However, perceptions of untrustworthiness that are ascribed to one's preferred subcomponent of the political system can help us understand the demotivating effects of political distrust. Negative evaluations of the political group one considers closest to his or her preferences and interests makes citizens less inclined to participate in political processes in an active manner by voting, attending a peaceful demonstration, or joining a pressure group, NGO or any other political group.

Arguably, our findings were not very strong in magnitude and there are many ways in which the design and measurement of other individual-level determinants and political action can be improved. Nevertheless, we believe that through our study and the empirical analysis presented, this thesis has managed not only to provide a clear conceptualisation of political

distrust and a discussion about the meaning, structure and functioning of citizen distrusting attitudes, but also to connect this to pressing debates regarding the role of distrust in influencing behavioural intentions. As argued at the outset of this thesis, political distrust may rest primarily on citizens' perceptions about their political systems and agents, yet these perceptions appear to be central in shaping citizens' subsequent decisions and actions. Investigating the precise links between political attitudes and behaviour is undoubtedly an area of political science (and possibly other fields, such as psychology and neurobiology) where more research will be welcome. We hope this thesis has contributed to the scholarly understanding of political distrust and that it has argued convincingly that attitudes of distrusting political attitudes offer a promising avenue for such endeavours.

7.2 Contribution of the conceptual model and survey measures of distrusting attitudes; implications for future research

This thesis's findings regarding the nature, meaning and function of distrusting political attitudes and its contribution of a conceptual model and novel survey instrument to scholarly research will hopefully trigger more extensive discussions on political distrust. In this section, we wish to reflect upon a number of key points made in this thesis and their implications for existing work, concepts and further research into political distrust, both conceptual and empirical.

Firstly, this research emphasised that citizen attitudes of political distrust are not normatively neutral. Contrary to certain scholars' claims that neither trust nor distrust should carry any moral associations and that they should be considered merely appropriate or inappropriate given the political agents and system confronting citizens, we have argued that distrusting attitudes entail a substantive moral claim. Political distrust refers to the belief that parts or even the entirety of the political system operate in a manner that violates shared norms of what is 'right' and 'fair'; as such, this belief also motivates behavioural intentions that may be considered disruptive for democratic political processes, in order to protect the citizen from interactions with political agents. If political agents can be removed and processes can be altered to no longer violate normative values, distrust can serve a positive purpose for democratic systems. Yet more often than not, distrusting attitudes are propagated into a

vicious circle of political distrust and untrustworthiness that has clearly a negative societal impact.

Secondly, it is worth mentioning that there is an additional key aspect where political distrust depart from the generalisable definition given for all relations distrust. We have already mentioned the circularity of distrust and untrustworthiness due to the repetitive nature of political interactions that make it harder for citizens to activate an "exit option". Furthermore, in Chapter 2 the analytical definitions of trust and distrust emphasised the absence of controlling mechanisms for the actions of the agent that is evaluated. David Easton (1975) has similarly tied the presence of trust in a political community with the fact that little supervision or scrutiny would be needed for political authorities. However, our research suggests that contrary to the explicit exclusion of controlling mechanisms from the analytical discussion of such relations, citizens' distrusting attitudes refer to a large part on the supervisory democratic mechanisms, which have been developed in modern political systems as part of liberal democratic processes. The technical functioning or failure of these political mechanisms, their ability to protect shared norms of fairness and the citizens' best-interest are part of evaluations of the trustworthiness or untrustworthiness of political systems. When such institutions are perceived to fulfil their role, distrust can be mitigated; however when they are perceived as non-existent, weak or biased, they allow the diffusion of political distrust. We believe that when we investigate citizen attitudes of trust and distrust in modern democracies it is important to consider the role of controls, not as external, but as part of the political system being evaluated.

An additional novel finding of the present thesis concerns the temporal dimension of distrusting attitudes, and we wish to consider the implications of the retrospective and prospective aspect of distrust in more detail in these concluding remarks. During the exploratory qualitative research we identified that judgments of political distrust were expressed in retrospective or prospective terms (or even both). Further, our quantitative analysis revealed that prospective evaluations of political untrustworthiness where consistently slightly lower than retrospective ones. We found that although the two time projections tap into a single underlying latent attitude, whether taken as indicators of political distrust or distrust towards the specific political target, negative assessments of future political conduct are better set to capture stronger distrust than negative assessments of past political conduct, which appear to come more easily to respondents in our sample.

We have sought to interpret this finding in terms of the variant role that hope and beliefs about the future play in the formulation of perceptions in politics and beyond. Much of the research carried out in this field of citizen attitudes has focused solely on the forward-looking nature of political trust. Indeed, we also found evidence of the probability calculus the meaning of expectations assigned to distrust. Yet, this thesis has argued that distrust is both retrospective and prospective in the way it is expressed by citizens and in the way it is understood conceptually. Trust is considered a tool to mitigate uncertainty and allow citizens to take "a leap of faith" in cooperating, interacting with agents and exposing themselves to vulnerability in relations with others. Perceptions of past trustworthy behaviour contribute to the formulation of positive expected outcomes, but trust reflects a belief about the future. Distrust on the other hand is more complex. It can be fully established on the basis of past instances of evidence of untrustworthiness or trust betrayal. Certainly, these perceptions of past untrustworthy behaviour contribute to the formation of negative future expectations regarding interactions with political agents, and these negative future assessments also constitute distrusting attitudes. Yet, the idea of this "leap of faith" is no longer relevant. Once distrust is established it can completely prevent forward-looking thinking and can also reside completely in the past. If forced to consider future interactions with political agents, the prospective aspect may come into play, though a citizen's orientation can also quite possibly remain as a retrospective judgment. It is not simply a matter of performance review, but an attitude of distrust understood as negative outcomes resulting both from past and from hypothetical future interactions. We believe that these subtle differences are important for understanding established relations of political distrust and providing a clear concept and definition of distrusting attitudes.

A final question we wish to address in this concluding chapter concerns the thesis's focus on political distrust and the potential criticism of whether this has been yet another study of political trust under a somewhat different title. We reaffirm that from the outset, we outlined three pressing reasons why a study focusing primarily on the concept of political distrust was timely and necessary. The observations of citizen attitudes towards their political systems in established democracies point to the prominence of negative orientations, while the theoretical and empirical work is almost exclusively framed in terms of political trust. Further, the quantitative indicators employed in mass surveys are also pointing to this trend of negative citizen orientations, but in their current format present limited opportunities to

interpret this phenomenon and understand political distrust And lastly, we argued that the ambivalent or unspecified relationship between the two concepts of trust and distrust poses a big puzzle and hindrance to advancing social scientific understanding of such citizen attitudes. The initial motivation and intention of this research has been clearly placed on investigating the nature of political distrust, in terms of its research design, methodological choices and the tools employed throughout, in an effort to understand the meaning and functioning of political distrust. However, it is also evident that this study is relevant to the scholarly work on political trust and hopes to have contributed to the academic debate with its conceptual model, novel measures and empirical findings of distrusting attitudes.

Following this investigation into the nature, meaning and functioning of citizens' attitudes of political distrust, how has this thesis contributed to solving the aforementioned puzzles? Do trust and distrust represent two different concepts? There are two ways to think about this relationship and provide an appropriate answer. First, we would be lead to consider trust and distrust as distinct concepts if they can coexist simultaneously as attitudes of a single individual. Indeed this is what some scholarly work outside political science has argued recently (Walle and Six, 2014; Lewicki et al., 1998). Following the conceptual model of political distrust advanced throughout this thesis it is possible to formulate different perceptions of the trustworthiness of political agents on the different evaluative dimensions, which was also encountered during exploratory research. However, these are synthesised by each citizen into a negative, positive or neutral orientation towards the political object overall.

Empirical evidence suggests citizens' perceptions of political untrustworthiness along technical, ethical and interest-based lines are positively associated. Similarly, we can argue that a citizen may simultaneously trust some parts of the political system while distrusting others, based on the levels of governance, on personal experience, special relationship or other information and stimuli. Yet again, this is not so much a case of trust and distrust co-existing than a case of different perceptions of political untrustworthiness based on the qualities of different political agents. Citizens will also synthesise such perceptions, prioritising the judgements they consider more important and deriving an overall attitude towards the political system and political authorities as a whole. Therefore, an overall distrusting attitude towards the political system can include perceptions of trustworthy political agents, which however are not prominent enough to tilt the balance away from

beliefs of negative outcomes. A neutral attitude of neither trust nor distrust may equally be derived at through the synthesis and relative weight each evaluation is given by the citizen. Nevertheless, we have good reason to believe that a citizen's perceptions of trustworthiness and untrustworthiness relating to different political agents within the same system are not independent, but follow the same direction. Various methods of empirical analysis supported this view, and our interpretation of this phenomenon in terms of the cognitive heuristic function of distrusting attitudes further suggests that political distrust cannot be thought of as coexisting with political trust. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that the two notions are part of the same concept, only that the two are contrasting.

A second step is to consider the meaning of each notion. From its outset this thesis has argued that distrust needs to be distinguished from lack of trust, because the two represent different states and have different meanings and manifestations. We have claimed that trust, distrust and lack of trust are three distinct states and have tried to prove both conceptually and empirically that the lack of one cannot be simply equated with the other. Going back to earlier definitions of political trust as a gradient, it was conceptualised as running from trust at the positive end to cynicism at the negative end (Miller, 1974a; Easton, 1975). We have already addressed what we consider to be the substantial difference between political cynicism and distrust, but the argument we wish to make here is that the choice of the term cynicism unavoidably presents an emphasis on the negative nature of citizens' orientations, not a simple lack of trust. Two questions follow this line of thought. Firstly, does the differentiation between negative, neutral and positive states require that they be considered as different concepts? In other words, are the three states fundamentally different in their meaning or in the way they relate and give rise to other notions? Secondly, would we expect the same evaluative dimensions derived from this study of the underlying aspects of political distrust to be equally suited to capturing the span of all three different states?

In regards to the first question, the answer lies in the description of distrust, trust and lack of trust: it is a matter of positivity or negativity in the outcomes a citizen believes will result from interactions with state agents, denoting a positive approach of 'good-will', a negative approach of 'ill-will' and a neutral or ambivalent approach of 'wait-and-see'. In fact, Easton's conceptual investigation of diffuse political support follows this – perhaps counter-intuitive – description of a range between 'positive' and 'negative' support (Easton, 1975). We believe we have satisfactorily shown that the three states are distinguishable conceptually

and empirically (as shown in Chapter 4) based on the psychological states they represent, the particular manifestations, emotive language and behavioural intentions they entail. This marks a contribution of the present research and knowledge acquired following the framing and focus of this thesis on distrust. Further research will hopefully take these insights into consideration in expanding and deepening the investigation on political distrust.

Regarding the second question on whether the same evaluative dimensions would be present in perceptions of political trustworthiness and the resulting attitudes of trust, this depends on whether we consider trust and distrust to be symmetrical notions or asymmetrical. We have already noted that the meaning and manifestations attached to the state of trust and distrust are not symmetrical and that the absence of one does not necessitate the presence of the other. The three evaluative dimensions were identified through a research design focused on perceptions of political untrustworthiness and distrusting attitudes. Hence, it is hard to argue convincingly that these are not part of trusting attitudes. Though the two states oppose one another and many citizens in the first part of our research often contrasted the qualities and political conduct they judged untrustworthy with positive qualities. For example, lies and political dishonesty were contrasted with truth and honesty, unfairness with fairness, failure and incompetence with success and competence, contravening one's best-interest with protecting it and many more. Yet we do not know whether these are necessarily the evaluative dimensions entailed in attitudes of political trust. In addition, in Chapter 6, we saw that a traditionally phrased trust-in-parliament item is strongly and negatively associated with the index of political distrust (the strongest link was with the prospective technical assessments of national parliament). Nevertheless, much variation remains and further research would undoubtedly be needed to investigate the particular underlying assessments entailed in trusting political attitudes.

Thus, even if we decide that political distrust is not an altogether different concept from trust, but rather that it represents a distinct state in an attitudinal continuum with a neutral state and negative and positive poles, we remain convinced that as political scientists we have grasped – to use the colloquial term – the 'wrong end of the stick'. Placing all the research focus, conceptual, measurement and empirical work on political trust, we have neglected the part of this attitudinal continuum that hosts the largest chunk of citizen orientations. Further, distrust is strongly associated with particular emotive states and behavioural intentions that have implications for citizens' subsequent decision-making and their relationship with the state and

state actors. The 'vicious circle' of distrust and untrustworthiness may be considered analogous to the 'virtuous circle' of trust and trustworthiness, but unless we focus on studying distrust we will not be able to understand and address the destructive implications the former has for democratic communities. As mentioned in earlier chapters, one of the particularities of political distrust compared to other distrusting relations is that citizens cannot completely remove themselves from the citizen-state relation and that if they do try, by abstaining from democratic processes, breaking the law or rejecting the legitimacy of political authority, they are still interacting with state agents and the political community in a multitude of ways. Going back to the initial claim by Russell Hardin that it suffices a government not be "generally and deeply distrusted", we reaffirm that the focus of research on political attitudes should remain on better comprehending this negative part of the spectrum (Hardin, 2004: 158). The emphasis citizens appear to place on evaluations of political untrustworthiness based on the violation of shared ethical norms may present a promising avenue for further research.

From its outset, this thesis acknowledged it could not conclusively address all the questions and puzzles surrounding the study of citizen attitudes of political distrust. In fact, one of its primary objectives has been to bring these puzzles to light and then provide a first step towards understanding the ontological nature, concept and empirical function of distrusting attitudes. We hope that with the mixed methods research design, the conceptual model of political distrust and new survey measures of distrusting attitudes, this thesis has made a solid contribution to this area of political behaviour that further research can consult, extend and expand upon. The new survey measures can be easily transported to research in other national contexts and provide useful comparative evidence as to the way various nationalities prioritise evaluative dimensions and differentiate between different political targets and time projections. Equally, more extensive qualitative research into national contexts that have not been included in the present project can provide additional information to support or supplement the conceptual model of distrusting attitudes. One of the unavoidable limitations of this doctoral research lies in the restricted national contexts studied in the first part of the design. It might be argued that conducting exploratory research in other countries, such as Scandinavian or Central and Eastern European nations, would have given rise to alternative findings of what distrust means for citizens and the cognitive and affective processes it involves. We have good theoretical reasons to believe that the three evaluative processes feature in judgments of political distrust irrespective of the democratic context studied, and

have justified the country case selection based on the accessibility to citizens' distrusting attitudes. What we might observe instead, however, is the relative difference in the prominence of one evaluative dimension over another, both among different groups within a national context and between different political cultures. For example, previous research conducted in the newer democracies of Central and Eastern Europe has argued that due to the lack of long historical democratic processes, citizens place more emphasis on political performance and quick positive results; hence distrusting attitudes in these national contexts may be dominated by technical and interest-based evaluations more than ethical assessments of untrustworthiness (Mishler and Rose, 2001). Yet these arguments add to the usefulness of our conceptual model and increase its potential contribution to the study of political distrust. The survey measures employed opens the door for comparative research across nations and national political cultures, which unfortunately could not be conducted in the space of this thesis. The theoretical framework followed for the study of political distrust (and trust) was derived from earlier work focusing on established democratic systems; for this reason, this thesis has limited itself to the discussion and research of citizen distrust in democracies. Nevertheless, additional research from democratising societies and partially free nation states can potentially provide useful information for citizen orientations towards political agents and the state.

Undoubtedly, there are still areas where further research will be invaluable for advancing our understanding of political distrust. Questions of measurement and empirical analysis are especially pressing if the discipline aims to monitor distrust trends across different national contexts and capture latent attitudes of distrust. For example, should we aim to capture political distrust in a continuous or discreet manner, creating measurement indicators that can separate the three distinct states of trust, lack of trust and distrust discussed above? Many aspects regarding the operationalisation and measurement of distrust are still arbitrary, but the choices researchers make have implications for the way we think about citizen attitudes and the empirical results we derive from analysis into the causes and consequences of distrust. It is still important to discuss where trust ends, where the lack of trust and distrust reside and where distrust begins. We know that one can trust or distrust to a certain extent and that therefore there exists a gradient of trusting and distrusting orientations. But in this analysis we have refrained from assuming that the indicator of political distrust created offers a perfect measurement of a trust-distrust continuum. Although such assumptions have been made before in empirical quantitative studies, as mentioned above, it is extremely doubtful

whether indicators capture a complete symmetry between the positive end of trust, negative end of distrust and a neutral midpoint of neither trust nor distrust, or indeed whether such symmetry exists (Cook and Gronke, 2005; Mishler and Rose, 1997; Uslaner, 2008). There are important measurement issues to be discussed further in the study of political trust and distrust which are very much part of the conceptual debate on distrusting attitudes.

In terms of the methodological choices followed in this thesis, it is important to note that the derived survey indicator is far from the only way to measure political distrust, even given the exploratory part of the research. The way distrust was operationalised in this thesis served the purpose of including the three specific evaluative dimensions entailed in attitudes of political distrust, the two time projections and two parts of the political system, so as to explore their internal structure and supplement the conceptual model of distrust developed in the thesis using statistical analysis. There could potentially be countless other ways to create indicators of distrust, for instance using quotes from the narrative interviews as attitude statements for respondents to agree or disagree with, such as "most of the laws passed by parliament are unfair". This thesis has proposed and tested only one potential approach to measuring distrusting attitudes, but hopes to be one of many studies to come that revaluates widely used measures and concepts as part of an extended research effort to examine attitudes of political distrust.

7.3 Concluding Remarks

Despite the limitations confronting doctoral research we believe this thesis succeeds in bringing to the fore the question of citizen attitudes of political distrust and in taking a first step to address three key puzzles: providing a clear conceptualisation of distrusting attitudes; investigating the meaning of political distrust and the of role technical, ethical and interest-based evaluative dimensions; and developing an alternative survey indicator for distrusting attitudes which provided further evidence as to the structure and operation of political distrust. As mentioned above, the identification and relative importance of these three lines of assessing political untrustworthiness offer a promising avenue for further research into citizens' political behaviour and possible remedial action to counteract distrusting orientations. Further, the novel survey indicator could be easily included in more surveys

and transported to other national contexts, yielding additional comparative evidence regarding the composition, structure and functioning of distrusting attitudes in different political communities.

More importantly, we hope this thesis has injected a much-needed fresh perspective into the question of citizen attitudes towards political systems. Many of the impasses reached in the study of political trust and support, which we discussed in detail in the earlier chapters of this thesis, are owing to the mismatch between the available theories, conceptual and empirical tools at our disposal on the one hand, and the reality of critical, negative and often outright hostile citizen attitudes towards their political systems on the other. This thesis aimed to bridge this gap by offering a conceptual, methodological and empirical contribution to the study of such negative attitudes, opening up future lines of inquiry into the implications of political distrust and possible avenues to reverse perceptions of untrustworthy political systems.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Most commonly used survey indicators for political trust and distrust (USA and Europe)

American National Election Studies:
"I'd like to talk about some of the different ideas about the government in Washington. These ideas don't refer to democrats or republicans in particular, but just to government in general. We want to see how you feel about these ideas."
Q1: "How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right-- just about always, most of the time or only some of the time?"
Q2: "Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?"
Q3: "Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?"
Q4: "Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are: a little crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked at all?"
Source: http://www.electionstudies.org/nesguide/toptable/tab5a_5.htm

Eurobarometer
I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. Trade unions, Political parties, The Civil service, The national government, The national Parliament, The European Union, The United Nations later questions introduced The European Commission, The European Central Bank, The European Parliament
Source:http://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer/topics-trends-question-retrieval/eb-trends-trend-files/list-of-trends/trust-in-institutions/

World/European Values Survey
I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? The government, Political parties, Parliament, The Civil service, The European Union (and other institutions).

European Social Survey
Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust.
[Country]'s parliament, Politicians, Political parties, The European Parliament (other institutions).

APPENDIX B

Information on selected countries

	UK	Italy	Greece	EU Average
GDP per capita (in USD)	41,776	35,477	21,966	34,300
Unemployment rate	7.5%	12.2%	27.3%	10.9%
Inequality (Gini coef.)	30.2	32.5	34.4	30.5
Governance Score (-2.5 to +2.5)	1.47	0.45	0.45	n.a
Corruption Perception Index (0 to 100)	76	43	40	n.a.
Democratic since	1918	1946	1974	n.a.
EU (ECC) member since	1973	1957	1981	n.a.
Electoral System	Majoritarian (First-past-the-post)	Closed party-list PR, with plurality bonus*	Reinforced PR	n.a.
Bicammeralism	Yes	Yes	No	n.a.
Federalism	No (devolution for certain regions)	No (special status for certain regions)	No	n.a.
Trust in Parliament	24%	10%	12%	25%
Trust in Government	24%	10%	10%	23%
Trust in EU	19%	23%	21%	31%

** The Italian electoral law in effect in 2013, also known as 'porcellum' was declared unconstitutional by the Italian Constitutional Court and was replaced in 2015 with an open party-list PR system*

Note: Data for 2013. Sources: World Bank, Eurostat, Transparency International

APPENDIX C

Information on study participants

Key demographic characteristics of interview participants

Socio-economic Status of Participants

SES Categories	Total Sample	UK	GREECE	ITALY
(1) Higher salariat	8.3%	12.5%	6.25%	6.25%
(2) Lower salariat	18.8%	25.%	18.75%	12.5%
(3) Intermediate occupations	18.8%	12.5%	12.5%	31.25%
(4) Petit bourgeoisie or independents	16.6%	6.25%	31.25%	12.5%
(5) Self employed occupations (eg.agriculture)	12.5%	18.75%	6.25%	12.5%
(6) Higher grade blue collar workers	2.1%	0%	0%	6.25%
(7) Lower grade white collar workers	0%	0%	0%	0%
(8) Lower technical occupations	2.1%	0%	6.25%	0%
(9) Routine occupations	6.25%	6.25%	6.25%	6.25%
(10) Never worked and long-term unemployed	6.25%	12.5%	6.25%	0%
(11)Student	8.3%	6.25%	6.25%	12.5%

Note: SES follows the European Socio-economic Classification Guide available at https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/esec/guide/docs/UserGuide.pdf

Comparison from Survey data from June 2012

OCCUPATION SCALE	UK	GREECE	ITALY
Self-employed	5.8%	18.5%	12.3%
Managers	12.1%	5%	4.5%
Other white collars	7.3%	12.5%	2.3%
Manual workers	18.1%	11.2%	17.8%
House persons	4.5%	9%	14.2%
Unemployed	9%	11.2%	5.8%
Retired	27.7%	22.1%	18.3%
Students	5.6%	1.5%	6.7%

Note: Source of data Eurobarometer 77.4 (June 2012)

Age of Participants

Sample	Average age in years
Total Sample	41.8
UK	44.7
Greece	44.8
Italy	35.8
Total Sample Age Groups	
18-20 years	4.1%

21-29 years	22.9%
30-39 years	22.9%
40-49 years	16.6%
50-59 years	16.6%
60-69 years	1.4%
70 years onwards	2%

Comparison from Survey data from June 2012

Sample	Average age in years
UK	51.9
Greece	45.4
Italy	48.6

Note: Source of data Eurobarometer 77.4 (June 2012)

Gender of Participants

Sample	Male	Female
Total Sample	50%	50%
UK	50%	50%
Greece	50%	50%
Italy	50%	50%

Comparison from Survey data from June 2012

Sample	Male	Female
UK	45.90%	54.10%
Greece	49.90%	5.10%
Italy	43.10%	56.90%

Note: Source of data Eurobarometer 77.4 (June 2012)

Participant and Interview Information

Participant ID	Geographical Location	Gender	Age Group	SES*	Interview Length
I-3201	Periphery	F	18-30	6	48'16"
I-3202	Periphery	F	18-30	11	58'01'
I-3103	Periphery	M	18-30	3	46'20"
I-1104	Periphery	M	60-70	1	55'36"
I-3105	Periphery	M	40-50	4	60'03"
I-1206	Big City	F	50-60	4	61'39"
I-1207	Big City	F	18-30	3	52'57"
I-1108	Big City	M	30-40	2	57'40"
I-1109	Big City	M	18-30	2	68'43"
I-2110	Smaller City	M	18-30	3	45'00"

I-1111	Big City	M	40-50	9	46'53"
I-2112	Smaller City	M	18-30	5	63'15"
I-2213	Smaller City	F	18-30	3	60'23"
I-2214	Smaller City	F	30-40	3	47'50"
I-2115	Smaller City	M	30-40	11	71'30"
I-2216	Smaller City	F	30-40	5	40'48"
G-1201	Big City	F	50-60	1	50'00"
G-1102	Big City	M	30-40	4	64'10"
G-1203	Big City	F	20-30	11	58'44"
G-1204	Big City	F	20-30	3	72'16"
G-3105	Smaller City	M	30-40	2	61'00"
G-3206	Smaller City	F	50-60	10	46'34"
G-1107	Big City	M	40-50	4	62'05"
G-2108	Periphery	M	40-50	4	60'23"
G-2209	Periphery	F	60-70	2	55'21"
G-2110	Periphery	M	40-50	4	48'49"
G-2111	Periphery	M	50-60	5	40'56"
G-1212	Big City	F	60-70	2	61'00"
G-3213	Smaller City	F	50-60	4	71'00"
G-3114	Smaller City	M	20-30	9	74"23"
G-3115	Smaller City	M	20-30	8	50'05"
G-3216	Smaller City	F	50-60	3	57'21"
UK-2101	Smaller City	M	20-30	11	65'23"
UK-3102	Periphery	M	30-40	2	64'00"
UK-2103	Smaller City	M	40-50	2	57'02"
UK-1204	Big City	F	20-30	3	61'56"
UK-1105	Big City	M	30-40	1	55'54"
UK-2106	Smaller City	M	20-30	3	78'55"
UK-1207	Big City	F	20-30	2	52'00"
UK-2108	Smaller City	M	60-70	4	61'21"
UK-1209	Big City	F	40-50	1	50'03"
UK-1210	Big City	F	30-40	2	64'51"
UK-1211	Big City	F	40-50	5	56'42"
UK-3212	Periphery	F	60-70	10	59'05"
UK-3213	Periphery	F	50-60	5	57'40"
UK-3214	Periphery	F	50-60	10	51'09"
UK-3115	Periphery	M	70-80	5	54'34"
UK-3116	Periphery	M	50-60	9	58'45"

Note: Socio-Economic Status number corresponds to the European Socio-economic Classification, for further information, see https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/files/esec/guide/docs/UserGuide.pdf

APPENDIX D

Invitation for an interview to potential study participants

Information about Research and Participation

Name of researcher:	Eri Bertsou
Name of programme:	PhD candidate in Political Science
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Academic Supervisor:	Dr. Michael Bruter

Information about me and my research

I am in my third year of study for a PhD degree in Political Science in London focusing on the area of political behaviour. I am interested to know more about what citizens think about their political institutions, their politicians and their political system in general. Through in-depth discussions with British citizens in various locations, I hope to understand better what is the relationship between citizens and their political system. If you agree to participate in my study, I would like to have a discussion with you about your thoughts on politics in Britain, your experiences in dealing with the political system and political institutions and how you feel about the current system of governance. I will not be asking you about personal political preferences, about whom you vote for or which political party you support. The aim of the discussion is to talk about how you, as a citizen, relate to the political system and political institution that affect your everyday life.

Important information about your participation

- If you would like to participate in my study, I would like to arrange a discussion with you, which would last approximately 60 minutes.
- Prior, during and after the interview, all personal information will remain

confidential and everything we discuss will remain anonymous. Your name will not appear in the thesis or any research notes.

- All the information gathered during my research will be used solely for academic purposes.
- Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. You have the choice whether to participate or not and you are free to stop our discussion at any time if you wish so.
- Participation in the research does not incur any risks. To thank you for your time and attention, I have arranged for an Amazon £10 gift voucher to be given to every participant after the completion of the research.
- I would like to use a tape recorder during our discussion to help with later transcription. At any time, you can ask me to stop the recording of our conversation. All recordings will be erased after transcription and all information will remain anonymous. If you would prefer not to have our conversation recorded, please let me know and I can arrange to take notes instead.

If you have any questions about me, about the research or about how I will use your information please ask me. If you have any questions after the interview, please write to me: *e.e.bertsou@lse.ac.uk*

Consent Form

Your signature below means that you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

_____ _____

Signature Date

APPENDIX E

Extract from Interview IT-2112

Observations	Retrospective event	Prospective expectation	Technical Evaluation	Moral Evaluation	Interest-based Evaluation	Emotive Responses to distrust	Behavioural Intention Responses to distrust:
1. Bad current situation in the country	System is not working/functioning properly	But cannot be changed	System is not working/functioning properly Justice system does not function High taxation High public spending	Scandals Corruption Politicians party with citizen money	Politicians think about their personal interest and not the good of the people Especially for graduates and those who have seen other countries (seing other young people in other countries and their opportunities, seeing institutions functioning, processes working)	Fear Anger Frustration No hope	Whoever can leave, leaves, Whoever cannot, votes for extreme (unti-system party Grillo)
2. People are afraid, because they say "What					Young people (us) cannot find work	Uncertainty, Fear	

do I do? Do I buy a house? Do I sell it? "					VAT high Uncertainty tax regime, changing every year		
3. Evaluating a politician	The old haven't done anything in 60 years. Looking at past actions/track record Berlusconi did well, but now need a new figure	Judge the young and new better than the old Instability Government falls or does nothing Conflict of interest: Politicians are there thanks to the system so they won't change the system	The old haven't done anything in 60 years. Berlusconi did well, but now need a new figure But the PM hasn't got a lot of powers The system is wrong There is never one that has enough power Instability Government falls or does nothing		Conflict of interest: Politicians are there thanks to the system so they won't change the system		
4. Distrust and vote: "I think they all feel	Voted for that which has less problems				I want a fast judiciary system		

distrust, total distrust. The only thing is that people try to salvage what is unsalvageable. When you vote, you vote for the lesser evil, you don't vote that which changes your life."	Your vote doesn't count	Your vote doesn't count	MP abuse of power. They live in another world Are not looking for people's interest but their own	No reliability/trust of political party "I can vote for the party of "san Pellegrino " and then Mr. San Pellegrino can send us a mafioso in Parliament" You are denied the decision, the choice Unfair system MP abuse of power	that functions (to be able to do business) You are denied the decision, the choice MP abuse of power. They live in another world Are not looking for people's interest but their own	Optimism is impossible	People want to break the system If there was trust people wouldn't vote for a comedian

Extract from Interview UK-2109:

Observations	Retrospective event	Prospective expectation	Technical Evaluation	Moral Evaluation	Interest-based Evaluation	Emotive Responses to distrust:	Behavioural Intention Responses to distrust:
1. Iraq war and Syria	Terrible Disgrace			People misled by Blair, deception, manipulation It was morally wrong, lost so many lives	Pleased that the House of Commons voted against intervention in Syria – reflected public opinion"	Disappointed, let down over Iraq Angry	
2. Eu influence	Example used: Banking coordination directive implementation through national legislation - Wasteful, Failure		Inefficient Expensive Mismanagement Bad implementation of legistlation Everybody/each country, does what they want Free trade is excellent	Brussels-Strasburg transfer ridiculous Mad, crazy	EU identified only as French and Germans (UK excluded) View of the EU as a Franco-German Club.		

Extract from Interview GR-1204

Observations	Retrospective event	Prospective expectation	Technical Evaluation	Moral Evaluation	Interest-based Evaluation	Emotive Responses to distrust	Behavioural Intention Responses to distrust:
1. No identification with any political party No representation: From the larger to the smaller level there is no representation for me	Identification with a person on the basis of what they say (where you agree on), But "after that, it's chaos" University student experience: negative image of political parties, coercion, bullying		Unions are the slime of the employees	Party support is fanatical Unbelievably fanatical Unions are the slime of the employees	Do not want to identify with fanaticism No representation: From the larger to the smaller level there is no representation for me	This is why you are denied your voice/will, it is being taken away from you	
2. "I won't pay" movement, not following the law	unfairness of the citizen-state relationship			unfairness of the citizen-state relationship		extreme fanatic reached your limits justifying the reaction	reaction by removing yourself from the relationship (breaking the law)

						blame them about your action 'they have brought me to the point'	
3. Voting for an extreme party Punishment of only a few. The money is still missing and there is still a problem It does not fix the problem	Only some get punished Which make it worse for all the rest who remain unpunished I cannot believe it is just one person	The money is still missing and there is still a problem It does not fix the problem		Seeing the consequences of actions Want to see punishment of those who have done wrong Unfair system, preferential/ unequal treatment of politicians The promise of punishment appeals to people Fairness is powerful emotion: "I would love to see there are consequences for all people"	The promise of punishment appeals to people	breaking point Anger Infuriation Fairness is powerful emotion:	

APPENDIX F

Analysis of variance of distrust items in the second half of the questionnaire.

The prospective items measuring political distrust were situated in the second half of our online questionnaire to have as much distance as possible from the retrospective items. The online survey included a media focused treatment, unrelated to the present study. There where three news articles per treatment condition (two shorter news articles and one longer news article) in the issue of investment in elderly care in times of economic crisis. Treatments focused on emotional news coverage (positive emotions, negative fear related emotions and negative anger related emotions) and the location of issue (in the UK, in the EU and outgroup). Exposure to any of these experimental conditions does not alter the responses to our distrust items. This is in line with our theoretical expectations that distrust is an attitude that is resistant to quick manipulation, and although it is sensitive to new experiences and information, changes occur less abruptly than in the case of loosely held opinions.

Analysis of variance of distrust items in the second half of the questionnaire

Independent Variable: Experimental condition	All experimental condition		Experimental condition per political object (UK, EU, Outgroup, Control)		Experimental condition per emotion (Neg Mobilising, Neg Demobilising, Positive, Control)	
	(F-ratio)	(Sig.)	(F-ratio)	(Sig.)	(F-ratio)	(Sig.)
Parliament Technical Prospective	.928	.499	.385	.764	.782	.504
Parliament Moral Prospective	1.124	.343	.073	.974	1.125	.338
Parliament Interest Prospective	.727	.684	.546	.651	.551	.648
Party Technical Prospective	.88	.543	.559	.642	.622	.601
Party Moral Prospective	.886	.537	1.165	.322	1.15	.328
Party Interest Prospective	.46	.901	.105	.957	.618	.603
Distrust in parliament (prospective index)	.882	.541	.208	.891	.64	.589
Distrust in preferred party (prospective index)	.688	.72	.6	.615	.756	.519

Note: Entries are F-ratios and significance (p-values) calculated through different groupings of experimental treatment

APPENDIX G

Operationalisation and Variable Information

Political Cynicism:

Political cynicism index is comprised by eight items measured on a 1-7 'strongly agree'-'strongly disagree' scale. Positively phrased items were recoded so that higher values to the political cynicism scale correspond to stronger levels of cynicism. The scale has a Chronbach's alpha coefficient of a=.572, which is low but acceptable for a multifaceted psychological construct. The overall scale's alpha coefficient would increase to above .625 if we removed item 5, yet we decided against it as this item taps on an additional aspect of cynical outlook. Factor analysis of the item pool confirms that all items load strongly on a single factor and the presence of a single factor with an eigenvalue higher than 1.

Descriptive Statistics

Political cynicism scale mean=4.18, st.deviation=.759, minimum=2, maximum=7

Item Phrasing

We would also like to know more about your personal opinions on politics in the UK. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. On the whole, democracy works quite well in the UK (Recoded)
2. Society has improved over the past fifty years (Recoded)
3. On the whole, UK politicians are rather good (Recoded)
4. Ultimately, our children will probably live a happier life than our generation (Recoded)
5. The situation of our country really depends on world finance and companies, ultimately government has no influence
6. We should recognize that some large segments of society are keen on making everyone else's life miserable and cannot be helped
7. In the UK, the school system is a big failure
8. Administrations make life worse and not better for UK citizens

(1) strongly disagree - (7) strongly agree

UK Identification Strength:

UK identification strength is captured through a single item asking respondents to indicate how strongly they identify with the UK using a seven-point scale.

Descriptive Statistics

UK Identification Strength mean=5.48, st.deviation=1.43, minimum=1, maximum=.7

Item Phrasing

Can you please tell us how strongly you identify with the United Kingdom?

(1) Not strongly at all - (7) Very strongly

Political Knowledge:

In our study we opted for a measure of political knowledge that tests respondents through a series of items, rather than a self-declared level of knowledge or interest in politics. We used three items pertaining to UK politics and provided five possible answer categories, including a 'Don't know' category. We recoded each correct answer to give one point, while an incorrect or 'Don't know' answer counted for zero points, and added them together into a political knowledge indicator scaled from 0-1.

Descriptive Statistics:
Political Knowledge mean=.664, st.deviation=.329, minimum=0, maximum=1.
Items Phrasing:
Please try to answer the following questions as spontaneously as possible. Don't worry if you are not sure about the correct answer, just try to answer as many questions as you can.
1. Who currently holds the position of 'Chancellor of the Exchequer'?
    1. George Osborne*
    2. Alistair Darling
    3. Kenneth Clarke
    4. William Hague
    5. I don't know
2. When is the next UK general election planned?
    1. 2014
    2. 2015*
    3. 2016
    4. 2017
    5. I don't know
3. General elections in the United Kingdom are based on which voting system?
    1. First-past-the-post*
    2. Proportional representation
    3. Relative majority
    4. Preferential voting
    5. I don't know

Political Efficacy:
We measure respondents' political efficacy using three items asking about the level of confidence one has their knowledge, influence and participation in political processes. All items are attitude statements measured using a 1-7 'strongly disagree' – 'strongly agree' scale. Negative phrased items were recoded so that the higher scores on the scale denote stronger feelings of political efficacy. The items create a scale with a Chronbach's alpha coefficient=744.
Descriptive Statistics:
Political Efficacy mean=4.70, st.deviation=1.24, minimum=1, maximum=7.
Items Phrasing:
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
1. When I go to vote, I often feel that the way I vote can influence the way my country is governed.
2. When I go to vote, I often feel that if many people feel and vote the way I do it can influence the way my country is governed.
3. I feel that I am not sufficiently knowledgeable to know what is right or not for our country. (Recoded)
(1) strongly disagree - (7) strongly agree

Left-Right Ideological Placement:
We follow the widely used operationalization of capturing respondents' ideology on the left-right political spectrum using a single item for ideological self-placement on a ten-point scale.
Descriptive Statistics:

Left-Right Ideology mean=5.62, st.deviation=2.09, minimum=1, maximum=10.
Item Phrasing:
In political matters people talk of "left" and "right". Where would you place your views on this scale?
(1) Left - (10) Right

Demographic Information
We gather demographic characteristics of respondents that pertain to their age, gender and level of Education. Respondents were asked to declare their age in years, gender and the highest level of education they have achieved. Educational level was measured using multiple categories of academic and vocational education completed. For ease of interpretation and due to the non-interval nature of the response categories, we recoded level of Education into three categories:
Low level of Education = Incomplete secondary education
Middle level of Education = Completed secondary education and some professional qualification attained
High level of Education = Completed higher level education, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees
Descriptive Statistics:
Age: Mean=47.6, st.deviation=16.8, minimum=18, maximum=90.
Gender: Proportion of male respondents=49.6%, proportion of female respondents=50.4%.
Education Category: Percentage of respondents with low levels of education=12.3%, percentage of respondents with medium levels of education=48.8%, percentage of respondents with high levels of education=38.9%.
Item Phrasing:
Age: How old are you?
Gender: Your gender?
Female (0)
Male (1)
Education: What is the highest level of education (general or vocational) you have successfully completed (usually by obtaining a certificate or diploma)?
1. Doctorate
2. Tertiary education
3. Undergraduate degree, master's degree
4. Higher education access courses
5. Upper secondary school
6. Lower secondary school
7. Other qualifications
8. No formal education
9. I don't want to answer this question

Categories recoded (excluding missing values): Higher Education level=1,2,3 Medium Education level=4,5, Lower Education Level=6,7,8.

Other measures of political support
Democratic Satisfaction and Trust in British Parliament:

We have included a standard measure of satisfaction with democracy, using a single item measured on a seven-point scale. We have also included a traditionally phrased item capturing institutional trust (trust in British Parliament) using a seven-point scale. This institutional trust item follows the conventional phrasing in European research that leaves the notion of political trust undefined, and up for the interpretation of each respondent. Both of these political support measures are helpful comparisons for our new political distrust index and assist in determining construct and concurrent validity of the new distrust measure.
Descriptive Statistics:
Democratic Satisfaction mean=3.53, st.deviation=1.33, minimum=1, maximum=7.
Trust in British Parliament mean=3.69, st.deviation=1.60, minimum=1, maximum=7.
Items Phrasing:
Democratic Satisfaction: To what extent are you satisfied with the way democracy works in the United Kingdom?
(1) *Very dissatisfied - (7) Very satisfied*
Trust in British Parliament: Please indicate how much you trust the British Parliament to usually take the right decisions:
(1) Do not trust at all - (7) Have complete trust

Behavioural Intention Variables
In our survey we have also included a number of items capturing behavioural intentions pertaining to political participation actions. It is worth stressing once more that these items tap on intentions to behave in a given way under certain circumstances and are not measures of actual behaviour (such as these used in comparative survey research asking respondents whether they have contacted a politician in last 12 months). We ask specifically about eight politically motivated actions: participating in a violent or peaceful demonstration, abstaining or casting a black vote in an election, voting for a radical or revolutionary party, leaving the country and joining a political party or non-governmental organization. Following the insights into the emotive and behavioural responses to political distrust afforded by popular interviews, we are especially interested in four of these behavioural intention items and their association to political distrust. Nevertheless, to avoid type II errors due to multiple comparisons we also create two indices of political behaviour following a factor analysis of the single items. We identify two distinct factors (eigenvalue higher than 1) and create two indices; the first referring to actions that represent political activism and more traditional form of participation (attending a a peaceful demonstration and joining a political party or other non-governmental organization) and the latter capturing more disruptive political behaviour (electoral abstention, blank vote, voting for radical parties, participating in a violent demonstration and leaving the UK). The index for active participation is comprised of three items, scores a reliability Chronbach's alpha coefficient of .748. The index for disruptive participation (that includes non-participation) is comprised of five items that score a reliability coefficient a=.727. Both indices are measured on a 0-1 scale for to facilitate comparisons.
Descriptive Statistics:
Active Participation Index mean=.562, st.deviation=.163, minimum=.25, maximum=1.
Disruptive Participation Index mean=.403, st.deviation=.143, minimum=.25, maximum=1.
Items Phrasing:
When you are unhappy with the situation in our country, would you consider the following reactions?
1. Abstain in elections
2. Vote for a radical or revolutionary party
3. Cast a blank vote

4. Participate in a violent demonstration
5. Leave the UK and move to another country
6. Participate in a peaceful demonstration
7. Join a political party
8. Join a pressure group or NGO

1 – No, certainly not
2 – No probably not
3 – Yes probably
4 – Yes certainly

Active Participation index: Items 6-8, scaled 0-1
Disruptive Participation index: Items 1-5, scaled 0-1
Individual behavioural intention items:
Abstain in Election: Proportion of 'certainly not' and 'probably not'=83.4%, proportion of 'certainly yes' and 'probably yes'=16.6%.
Vote Radical: Proportion of 'certainly not' and 'probably not'=76%, proportion of 'certainly yes' and 'probably yes'=24%.
Peaceful Demonstration: Proportion of 'certainly not' and 'probably not'=68.7, proportion of 'certainly yes' and 'probably yes'=31.3%.
Leave UK: Proportion of 'certainly not' and 'probably not'=80.5%, proportion of 'certainly yes' and 'probably yes'=19.5%.

APPENDIX H

Additional tables not presented in Chapter 5

Table 5.4.2: One-factor model for Parliament distrust items

	Factor 1
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.766
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.740
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.743
Parliament Technical Prospective	.876
Parliament Moral Prospective	.875
Parliament Interest Prospective	.808
Eigenvalue	4.25
Variance Explained	7.8%
LR Test	χ^2=651, p<.000

Note: Entries are the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis using the Maximum Likelihood method for factor extraction

Table 5.4.3: One-factor model for Preferred Party distrust items

	Factor 1
Party Technical Retrospective	.676
Party Moral Retrospective	.659
Party Interest Retrospective	.685
Party Technical Prospective	.907
Party Moral Prospective	.938
Party Interest Prospective	.89
Eigenvalue	4.34
Variance Explained	72.3%
LR Test	χ^2=1126, p<.000

Note: Entries are the result of Exploratory Factor Analysis using the Maximum Likelihood method for factor extraction

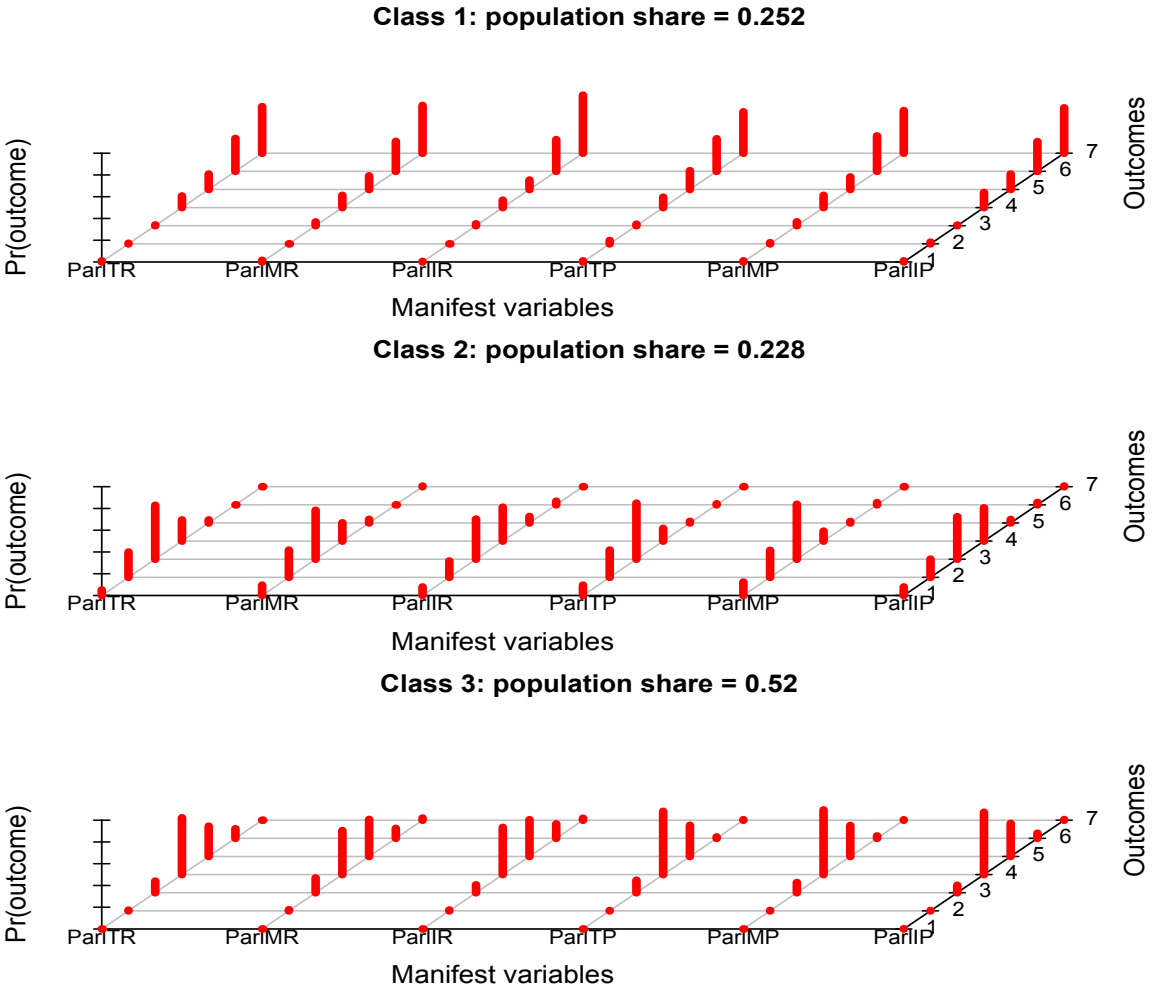
Table 5.3.1: Reliability analysis for Parliament items

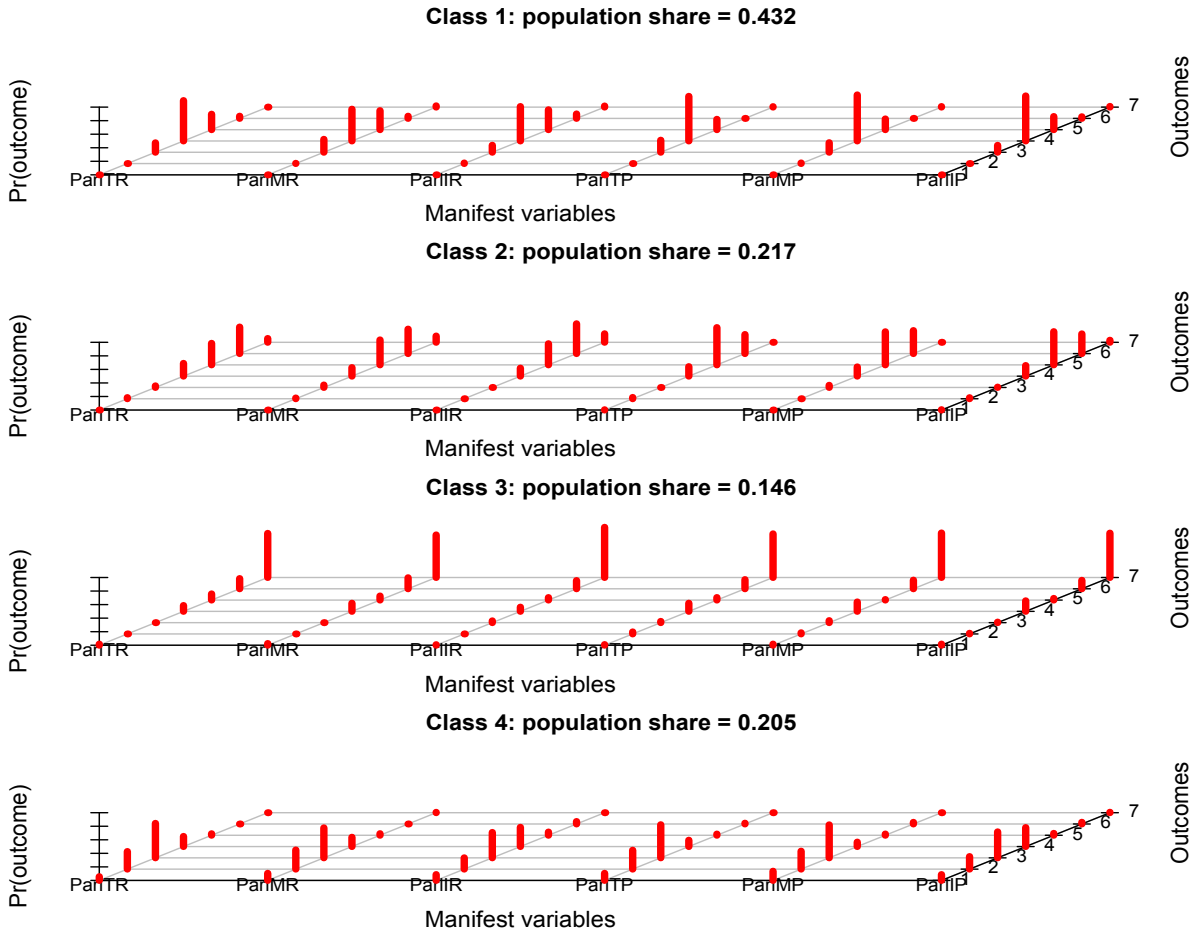
Items	Item-scale correlation	Alpha, if item deleted
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.850	.899
Parliament Moral Retrospective	.827	.905
Parliament Interest Retrospective	.832	.903
Parliament Technical Prospective	.860	.897
Parliament Moral Prospective	.861	.897
Parliament Interest Prospective	.811	.906
Parliament Distrust Scale Chronbach's a coefficient = .916		

Table 5.3.2: Reliability analysis for Preferred Party items

Items	Item-scale correlation	Alpha, if item deleted
Party Technical Retrospective	.848	.909
Party Moral Retrospective	.832	.912
Party Interest Retrospective	.847	.910
Party Technical Prospective	.855	.907
Party Moral Prospective	.879	.903
Party Interest Prospective	.835	.911
Preferred Party Distrust Scale Chronbach's a coefficient = .923		

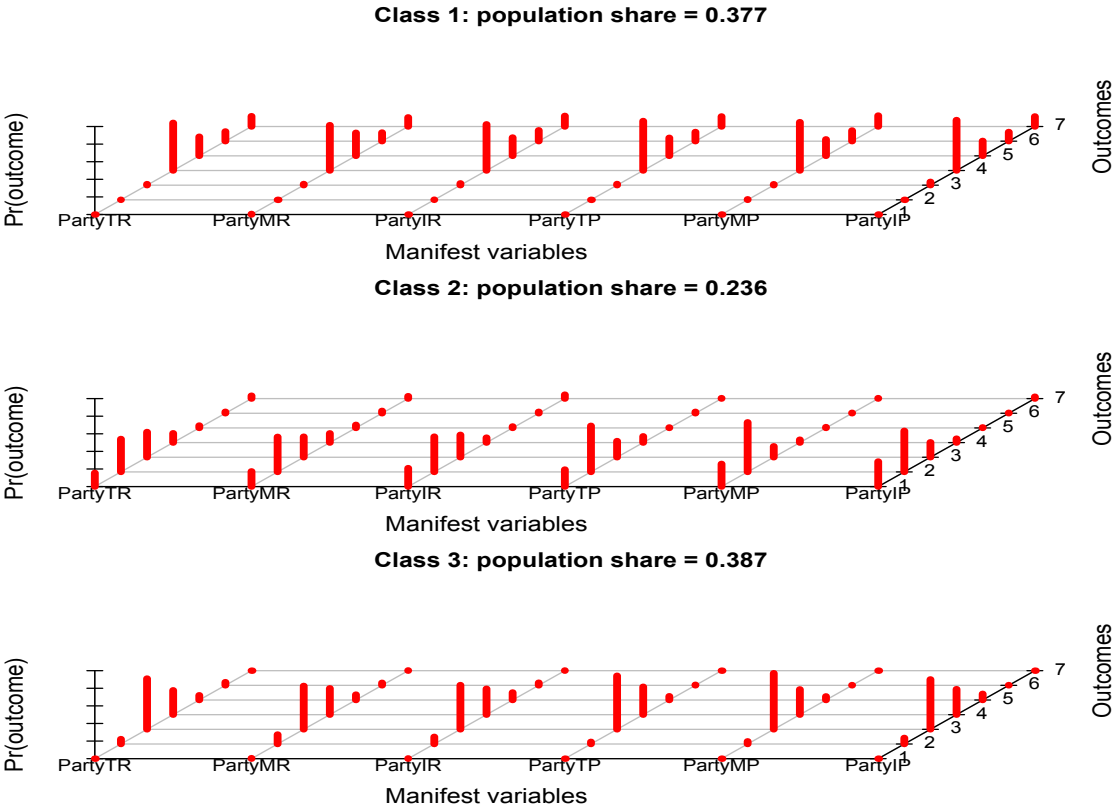
Figure 5.4.3: Latent class analysis using three and four-class model for items referring to National parliament

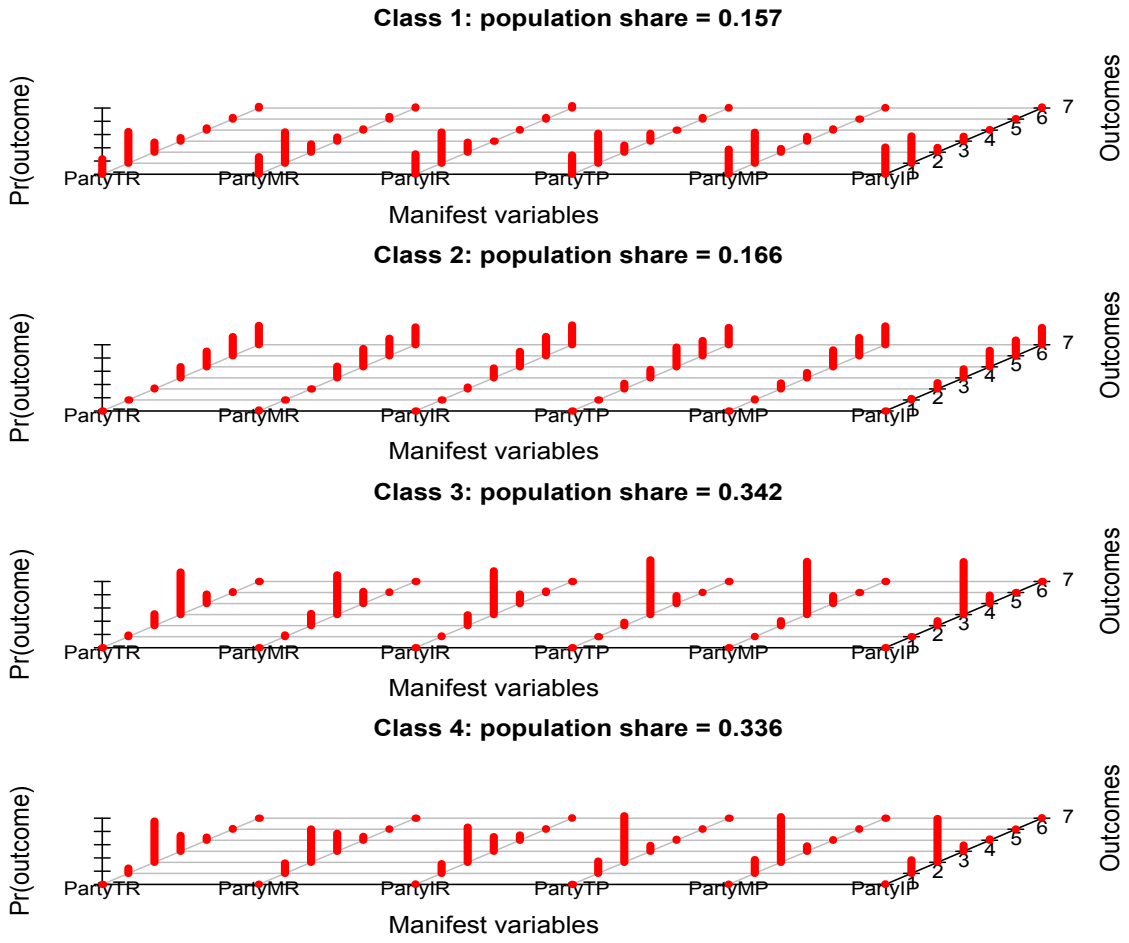




Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package. Length of each bar denotes the probability members in this class will pick the specified response from the 1-7 measurement scale. The probability scale is situated on the left, the seven-point response scale is on the right hand-side of each figure.

Figure 5.4.4: Latent class analysis using three and four-class models for items referring to preferred political party





Note: Models calculated in R using poLCA statistical package. Length of each bar denotes the probability members in this class will pick the specified response from the 1-7 measurement scale. The probability scale is situated on the left, the seven-point response scale is on the right hand-side of each figure.

APPENDIX I

Additional tables not presented in Chapter 6

Table 6.10.1: OLS Regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining disruptive political participation

Dependent Variable: Disruptive political participation						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.012***					
	(.003)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		.014***				
		(.003)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			.007*			
			(.003)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				.011***		
				(.003)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					.010***	
					(.003)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						.006*
Controls						(.003)
Left-Right Ideology	.004	.004*	.003	.003	.003	.003
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
2.Middle level Education	-.007	-.007	-.009	-.008	-.010	-.009
	(.015)	(.015)	(.016)	(.015)	(.015)	(.016)
3.Higher Level Education	-.015	-.016	-.019	-.017	-.019	-.018
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)
Age	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***
	(.0002)	(.0002)	(.0003)	(.0002)	(.0002)	(.0002)
Male	.038***	.039***	.040***	.039***	.039***	.039***
	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)
Constant	.469***	.458***	.497***	.475***	.482***	.500***
	(.030)	(.029)	(.029)	(.029)	(.028)	(.029)

R-squared	.142	.150	.133	.141	.140	.133

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.10.2: OLS Regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining active political participation

Dependent Variable: Active political participation						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	-.0004					
	(.004)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		.001				
		(.004)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			.0002			
			(.004)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				-.000001		
				(.004)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					.002	
					(.004)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						.00009
Controls						(.004)
Left-Right Ideology	-.014***	-.013***	-.013***	-.013***	-.013***	-.013***
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
2.Middle level Education	.024	.024	.024	.024	.023	.024
	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)
3.Higher Level Education	.033*	.033*	.033*	.033*	.033*	.033*
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)
Age	-.0004	-.0004	-.0004	-.0004	-.0004	-.0004
	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)
Male	.023*	.023*	.023*	.023*	.022*	.023*
	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)
Constant	.624***	.617***	.621***	.622***	.612***	.622***
	(.036)	(.035)	(.035)	(.034)	(.034)	(.035)

R-squared	.040	.040	.040	.040	.041	.040

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.11.1: OLS Regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining disruptive political participation

Dependent Variable: Disruptive political participation

Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	.011***					
	(.004)					
Party Moral Retrospective		.008**				
		(.004)				
Party Interest Retrospective			.005			
			(.003)			
Party Technical Prospective				.006		
				(.004)		
Party Moral Prospective					.003	
					(.003)	
Party Interest Prospective						.002
Controls						(.004)
Left-Right Ideology	.003	.003	.002	.002	.002	.002
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
2.Middle level Education	-.010	-.010	-.010	-.008	-.008	-.008
	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)	(.015)
3.Higher Level Education	-.019	-.017	-.018	-.017	-.018	-.018
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)	(.016)
Age	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***	-.003***
	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)	(.0003)
Male	.040***	.041***	.040***	.040***	.040***	.040***
	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)
Constant	.485***	.495***	.507***	.506***	.519***	.520***
	(.034)	(.034)	(.033)	(.034)	(.033)	(.033)
R-squared	.139	.135	.132	.132	.130	.130

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.11.2: OLS Regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining active political participation

Dependent Variable: Active political participation						
Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	-.014***					
	(.004)					
Party Moral Retrospective		-.017***				
		(.004)				
Party Interest Retrospective			-.018***			
			(.004)			
Party Technical Prospective				-.021***		
				(.004)		
Party Moral Prospective					-.024***	
					(.004)	
Party Interest Prospective						-.024***
Controls						(.004)
Left-Right Ideology	-.015***	-.016***	-.016***	-.015***	-.015***	-.015***
	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
2.Middle level Education	.0255	.0248	.0251	.0210	.0207	.0229
	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)
3.Higher Level Education	.034*	.031	.033*	.030	.030	.030
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)	(.019)
Age	-.0004	-.0004	-.0005	-.0006	-.0006	-.0007*
	(.0004)	(.0004)	(.0004)	(.0004)	(.0004)	(.0004)
Male	.0226*	.0206*	.0217*	.0214*	.0201*	.0223*
	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)
Constant	.683***	.702***	.704***	.715***	.727***	.728***
	(.034)	(.034)	(.033)	(.034)	(.033)	(.033)
R-squared	.054	.061	.065	.070	.080	.080

*Note: Entries are regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Full binary logistic regression analyses for each distrust item explaining individual behavioural intention items

Table 6.12.1: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining behavioural intention to abstain in an election

Dependent Variable: Abstain						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	1.093					
	(.079)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		1.206***				
		(.086)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			1.029			
			(.074)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				1.205**		
				(.089)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					1.166**	
					(.085)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						1.121
Controls						(.086)
Left-Right Ideology	1.001	1.019	.994	1.008	1.007	1.002
	(.051)	(.052)	(.051)	(.051)	(.051)	(.051)
2.Middle level Education	.775	.784	.761	.773	.753	.761
	(.247)	(.251)	(.241)	(.247)	(.240)	(.242)
3.Higher Level Education	.525*	.529*	.511**	.531*	.517**	.513**
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.176)	(.179)	(.171)	(.179)	(.174)	(.172)
Age	.953***	.951***	.954***	.952***	.952***	.953***
	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)
Male	1.046	1.027	1.058	1.029	1.030	1.044
	(.215)	(.212)	(.216)	(.212)	(.212)	(.214)
Constant	1.518	.944	2.053	.997	1.195	1.409
	(.927)	(.567)	(1.249)	(.595)	(.701)	(.848)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.12.2: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining behavioural intention to vote for a radical party

Dependent Variable: Vote Radical						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	1.197***					
	(.073)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		1.124**				
		(.066)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			1.173***			
			(.072)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				1.128**		
				(.069)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					1.125*	
					(.068)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						1.105
Controls						(.071)
Left-Right Ideology	1.128***	1.121***	1.130***	1.115**	1.116**	1.113**
	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)
2.Middle level Education	1.324	1.286	1.256	1.271	1.250	1.265
	(.382)	(.369)	(.361)	(.364)	(.358)	(.362)
3.Higher Level Education *(ref.cat. Low Educ)*	1.187	1.139	1.114	1.128	1.109	1.110
	(.356)	(.339)	(.332)	(.335)	(.329)	(.329)
Age	.985***	.985***	.984***	.986***	.985***	.985***
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Male	2.322***	2.343***	2.354***	2.332***	2.330***	2.336***
	(.418)	(.420)	(.423)	(.418)	(.417)	(.418)
Constant	.0737***	.104***	.0838***	.107***	.110***	.118***
	(.040)	(.055)	(.045)	(.055)	(.056)	(.062)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.12.3: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining behavioural intention to leave the country

Dependent Variable: Leave UK						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	1.300***					
	(.088)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		1.198***				
		(.078)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			1.137*			
			(.076)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				1.188**		
				(.080)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					1.193***	
					(.079)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						1.110
Controls						(.078)
Left-Right Ideology	1.051	1.045	1.037	1.033	1.036	1.026
	(.049)	(.049)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)
2.Middle level Education	1.323	1.276	1.235	1.253	1.224	1.237
	(.442)	(.422)	(.407)	(.413)	(.404)	(.406)
3.Higher Level Education *(ref.cat. Low Educ)*	1.420	1.342	1.289	1.328	1.299	1.285
	(.485)	(.454)	(.434)	(.447)	(.438)	(.431)
Age	.962***	.962***	.963***	.963***	.963***	.964***
	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)
Male	1.846***	1.861***	1.889***	1.855***	1.847***	1.871***
	(.361)	(.361)	(.365)	(.359)	(.358)	(.362)
Constant	.174***	.266**	.347*	.295**	.299**	.410
	(.102)	(.152)	(.201)	(.167)	(.167)	(.234)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.12.4: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in parliament items explaining behavioural intention to attend a peaceful demonstration

Dependent Variable: Peaceful Demo						
Independent Variables:	Parliament Technical Retro	Parliament Moral Retro	Parliament Interest Retro	Parliament Technical Prosp	Parliament Moral Prosp	Parliament Interest Prosp
Parliament Technical Retrospective	.992					
	(.058)					
Parliament Moral Retrospective		1.015				
		(.056)				
Parliament Interest Retrospective			1.039			
			(.060)			
Parliament Technical Prospective				1.021		
				(.059)		
Parliament Moral Prospective					1.090	
					(.062)	
Parliament Interest Prospective						1.063
Controls						(.064)
Left-Right Ideology	.849***	.853***	.857***	.853***	.860***	.858***
	(.034)	(.034)	(.035)	(.034)	(.034)	(.034)
2.Middle level Education	1.376	1.380	1.371	1.379	1.360	1.371
	(.373)	(.374)	(.371)	(.373)	(.369)	(.371)
3.Higher Level Education *(ref.cat. Low Educ)*	1.611*	1.618*	1.611*	1.619*	1.612*	1.611*
	(.445)	(.447)	(.444)	(.447)	(.445)	(.445)
Age	.990**	.989**	.989**	.989**	.989**	.989**
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Male	1.267	1.264	1.264	1.263	1.253	1.259
	(.204)	(.203)	(.203)	(.203)	(.202)	(.203)
Constant	1.197	1.060	.941	1.037	.768	.857
	(.596)	(.516)	(.465)	(.502)	(.364)	(.417)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.13.1: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining behavioural intention to abstain in an election

Dependent Variable: Abstain						
Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	1.376***					
	(.104)					
Party Moral Retrospective		1.358***				
		(.102)				
Party Interest Retrospective			1.338***			
			(.095)			
Party Technical Prospective				1.301***		
				(.098)		
Party Moral Prospective					1.268***	
					(.091)	
Party Interest Prospective						1.264***
Controls						(.092)
Left-Right Ideology	1.025	1.036	1.021	.999	1.003	1.000
	(.054)	(.055)	(.053)	(.051)	(.051)	(.051)
2.Middle level Education	.727	.737	.729	.788	.777	.765
	(.234)	(.237)	(.234)	(.253)	(.249)	(.245)
3.Higher Level Education *(ref.cat. Low Educ)*	.492**	.522*	.491**	.540*	.538*	.525*
	(.167)	(.177)	(.167)	(.183)	(.182)	(.178)
Age	.952***	.952***	.953***	.955***	.954***	.955***
	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)	(.007)
Male	1.052	1.075	1.044	1.056	1.073	1.040
	(.218)	(.223)	(.216)	(.218)	(.221)	(.214)
Constant	.634	.600	.693	.768	.868	.880
	(.372)	(.363)	(.404)	(.452)	(.505)	(.513)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.13.2: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining behavioural intention to vote for a radical party

Dependent Variable: Vote Radical						
Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	1.025					
	(.065)					
Party Moral Retrospective		.963				
		(.062)				
Party Interest Retrospective			.970			
			(.059)			
Party Technical Prospective				.890*		
				(.059)		
Party Moral Prospective					.828***	
					(.054)	
Party Interest Prospective						.863**
Controls						(.055)
Left-Right Ideology	1.103**	1.092**	1.095**	1.092**	1.084*	1.088**
	(.047)	(.047)	(.047)	(.046)	(.046)	(.046)
2.Middle level Education	1.263	1.270	1.271	1.244	1.223	1.258
	(.361)	(.363)	(.363)	(.356)	(.351)	(.360)
3.Higher Level Education	1.106	1.102	1.108	1.082	1.048	1.080
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.327)	(.326)	(.328)	(.321)	(.312)	(.321)
Age	.986***	.986***	.986***	.985***	.985***	.984***
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Male	2.372***	2.362***	2.370***	2.364***	2.343***	2.384***
	(.424)	(.422)	(.424)	(.423)	(.421)	(.428)
Constant	.170***	.227***	.218***	.317**	.441	.369*
	(.0872)	(.119)	(.111)	(.164)	(.227)	(.190)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.13.3: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining behavioural intention to leave the coluntry

Dependent Variable: Leave UK						
Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	1.042					
	(.072)					
Party Moral Retrospective		1.016				
		(.070)				
Party Interest Retrospective			.981			
			(.065)			
Party Technical Prospective				1.120		
				(.078)		
Party Moral Prospective					1.045	
					(.070)	
Party Interest Prospective						.996
Controls						(.068)
Left-Right Ideology	1.019	1.016	1.012	1.020	1.017	1.014
	(.047)	(.048)	(.047)	(.047)	(.047)	(.046)
2.Middle level Education	1.232	1.236	1.240	1.262	1.246	1.237
	(.405)	(.406)	(.407)	(.416)	(.409)	(.406)
3.Higher Level Education	1.279	1.284	1.282	1.320	1.298	1.280
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.429)	(.431)	(.430)	(.444)	(.436)	(.430)
Age	.965***	.965***	.965***	.965***	.965***	.965***
	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)	(.006)
Male	1.901***	1.902***	1.899***	1.908***	1.906***	1.899***
	(.366)	(.367)	(.366)	(.368)	(.368)	(.366)
Constant	.553	.614	.718	.400	.543	.672
	(.308)	(.350)	(.397)	(.225)	(.302)	(.375)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

Table 6.13.4: Binary logistic regressions for distrust in preferred party items explaining behavioural intention to attend a peaceful demonstration

Dependent Variable: Peaceful Demo						
Independent Variables:	Party Technical Retro	Party Moral Retro	Party Interest Retro	Party Technical Prosp	Party Moral Prosp	Party Interest Prosp
Party Technical Retrospective	.883**					
	(.033)					
Party Moral Retrospective		.869**				
		(.053)				
Party Interest Retrospective			.859***			
			(.050)			
Party Technical Prospective				.857**		
				(.054)		
Party Moral Prospective					.814***	
					(.049)	
Party Interest Prospective						.830***
Controls						(.206)
Left-Right Ideology	.839***	.833***	.836***	.843***	.837***	.840***
	(.054)	(.033)	(.033)	(.033)	(.033)	(.033)
2.Middle level Education	1.406	1.400	1.402	1.349	1.342	1.370
	(.382)	(.381)	(.382)	(.366)	(.366)	(.373)
3.Higher Level Education	1.630*	1.593*	1.620*	1.574	1.540	1.573
(ref.cat. Low Educ)	(.452)	(.442)	(.449)	(.436)	(.429)	(.437)
Age	.989**	.989**	.989**	.988**	.988**	.988**
	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Male	1.266	1.252	1.259	1.257	1.245	1.269
	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)
Constant	1.945	2.158	2.251*	2.244*	2.861**	2.624**
	(.925)	(1.039)	(1.067)	(1.082)	(1.376)	(1.264)

*Note: Entries are odds ratios, standard errors in parentheses. Significance *** p<.01, ** p<.05.*

APPENDIX J

Full survey-questionnaire used in the analysis:

Introduction: Thank you for participating in our survey. This study is conducted by researchers from the London School of Economics (LSE). Our study looks at different ways people read the news.

Q6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your use of the news?

1. I use the news to see how politicians stand on issues
2. I use the news to keep up with important political issues
3. I use the news to help me make up my mind about things
4. I often try to relate what I see on TV news or read in the newspaper to my own personal experiences
5. I often try to think about how what I see on TV news or read in the newspaper relates to other things I know

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

And how well do the following statements describe your own personality?

Q7: I see myself as someone who …

1. …is reserved.
2. …is generally trusting.
3. …handles stress well.
4. …is outgoing, sociable.
5. …tends to find fault with others.
6. …gets nervous easily.
7. …prefers to listen than to speak.
8. …tries to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something.
9. …likes to challenge my own thinking abilities.
10. …prefers simple to complex problems.

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q8: And to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me
2. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel
3. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective
4. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies (R)
5. I listen to what my "gut" or "heart" says in many situations
6. I try not to let feelings guide my actions *
7. My feelings tell me a lot about how to act in a given situation
8. Feelings are a valuable source of information
9. Feelings only interfere with behavior *

(1) Strongly disagree __ (7) Strongly agree

We would also like to know more about your personal opinions on politics in the UK and Europe.

Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

9. On the whole, democracy works quite well in the UK
10. Society has improved over the past fifty years
11. On the whole, UK politicians are rather good
12. Ultimately, our children will probably live a happier life than our generation
13. The situation of our country really depends on world finance and companies, ultimately government has no influence
14. We should recognize that some large segments of society are keen on making everyone else's life miserable and cannot be helped
15. In the UK, the school system is a big failure
16. Administrations make life worse and not better for UK citizens
17. It is a good thing that we all have a passport that says 'European Union – United Kingdom'
18. It is a good thing that European Union citizens who live in another European Union country can vote in local elections in the town where they live
19. On the whole, it would be a good thing if we could travel from Britain to France or Germany without having to pass border control formalities

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q10: Taking everything into consideration, would you say that the United Kingdom ...?

(1) has on balanced benefited or ...
(2) has not benefited from being a member of the European Union?

Q11: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. When I enter a polling station, I clearly have the feeling that I have a responsibility on my shoulders
2. When I decide who to vote for, I think of what is good for my country rather than what is good for myself
3. I think that in an election, if everyone votes for the party who would best defend their interest, the final result will likely be bad for society as a whole
4. In general, I tend to vote in all elections
5. When I go to vote, I often feel that the way I vote can influence the way my country is governed
6. When I go to vote, I often feel that if many people feel and vote the way I do it can influence the way my country is governed
7. On the whole I feel that I have a rather good understanding of the key political choices facing my country
8. I feel that I am not sufficiently knowledgeable to know what is right or not for our country

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q12: When you think of Parliament as an institution, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions
2. In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions
3. In recent years, I would say that Parliament has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q13: Now, think of the party you would be most likely to vote for in the next general election. Thinking of this party, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a competent manner in the case of technically complex questions
2. In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in a moral manner in the case of ethically difficult questions
3. In recent years, I would say that this party has usually acted in accordance with my political preferences in the case of ideologically divisive questions

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

There is a lot of different ways the news is presented today. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the news?

Q14: I like news that…

1. …includes strong opinions
2. …only describes facts
3. …talks about people like me
4. …shows what the 'man on the street' thinks
5. …makes me think
6. …makes me feel something
7. …makes me learn something
8. …gives me information about issues I am interested in.
9. …focuses on people's happiness.

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Now a couple of questions about your personal media use.

Q15: How often do you watch the following TV programs?

1. BBC News
2. Daily Politics
3. Panorama
4. ITV News

5. Channel 4 News
6. Sky News
7. Soap Operas (for example, ‘EastEnders’)
8. Reality Shows (for example, ‘Come Dine with Me’)
9. Talk Shows (for example, ‘The Jeremy Kyle Show’)

(1) never
(2) a few times a year
(3) a few times a month
(4) a few times a week
(5) every day

Q16: And how often do you read about politics on the Internet through one of the following sources?

1. Internet news sites of newspapers or television channels
2. Other internet news sites
3. Blogs or discussion forums
4. Social media (for example, Facebook or Twitter)
5. Official party or government websites

(1) never
(2) a few times a year
(3) a few times a month
(4) a few times a week
(5) every day

Q17: How often do you talk about politics with…

1. …your friends?
2. …your family?
3. …your co-workers and/or clients?

(1) never
(2) a few times a year
(3) a few times a month
(4) a few times a week
(5) every day

Q18: In political matters people talk of “left” and “right”. Where would you place your views on this scale?
(1) left __ (10) right

We have a number of parties in the United Kingdom, each of which would like to get your vote.

Q19: How probable is it that you will ever vote for the following parties?

Please specify your views on a 7-point scale where 1 means “not at all probable” and 7 means “very probable.”

1. Labour Party
2. Conservative Party
3. Liberal Democrat Party
4. UK Independence Party
5. Green Party
6. British National Party
7. Others (open ended)

(1) – not at all probable – (7) – very probable

Q20: If, for the sake of argument, you think of the election as the political equivalent of the Football World Cup Final between the Conservative and Labour parties, and you think of your own position as voter.

Would you say that you were more like:
1 Definitely a referee
2 Mostly a referee
4 Mostly a supporter
5 Definitely supporter
6 A bit of both
7 Neither

Please try to answer the following questions as spontaneously as possible. Don't worry if you are not sure about the correct answer, just try to answer as many questions as you can.

Q21: Which country is currently not part of the European Union?
1. Ireland
2. Austria
3. Norway*
4. Croatia
5. I don't know

Q22: Who currently holds the position of 'Chancellor of the Exchequer'?
6. George Osborne*
7. Alistair Darling
8. Kenneth Clarke
9. William Hague
10. I don't know

Q23: When is the next UK general election planned?
6. 2014
7. 2015*
8. 2016
9. 2017
10. I don't know

Q24: Who is the current president of the European Commission?
1. José Manuel Barroso*
2. Romano Prodi

3. Catherine Ashton
4. Herman Van Rompuy
5. I don't know

Q25: General elections in the United Kingdom are based on which voting system?
6. First-past-the-post*
7. Proportional representation
8. Relative majority
9. Preferential voting
10. I don't know

Q26: When is the next European Parliament election planned?
1. 2014*
2. 2015
3. 2016
4. 2017
5. I don't know

On the next page you will see three short news articles that have recently been published in the media.
The articles will remain on the screen for a minimum of 1 minute, but you may take as much time as you like to read them. When you have finished, scroll down and click the arrow to move on.
We will ask you to answer some questions about the news articles.
Please note: Read the news articles carefully, as you will not be able to access them again later.
Condition 1: National Actors*Negative Mobilizing
Condition 2: National Actors*Negative Demobilizing
Condition 3: National Actors*Positive Emotions
Condition 4: EU Actors*Negative Mobilizing
Condition 5: EU Actors*Negative Demobilizing
Condition 6: EU Actors*Positive Emotions
Condition 7: Outgroup Actors*Negative Mobilizing
Condition 8: Outgroup Actors*Negative Demobilizing
Condition 9: Outgroup Actors*Positive Emotions
Condition 10: Control Condition

Q27: What are the first three words that come to your mind when you think of the three news articles you just read?_____ *Open ended*

Q28: We are now interested in what you were feeling while reading the three news articles. Again, please put down the first three words that come to your mind._____ *Open ended*

Q29: Imagine you had to explain the content of the news articles you just read to a friend in one sentence. What would you say? _____ *Open ended*

Q30: Please look at each of the following words and fill in the blanks with letters that will complete the word. Please type the completed word into the corresponding text box. The completed word needs to be the same number of letters as is indicated in the prompt.

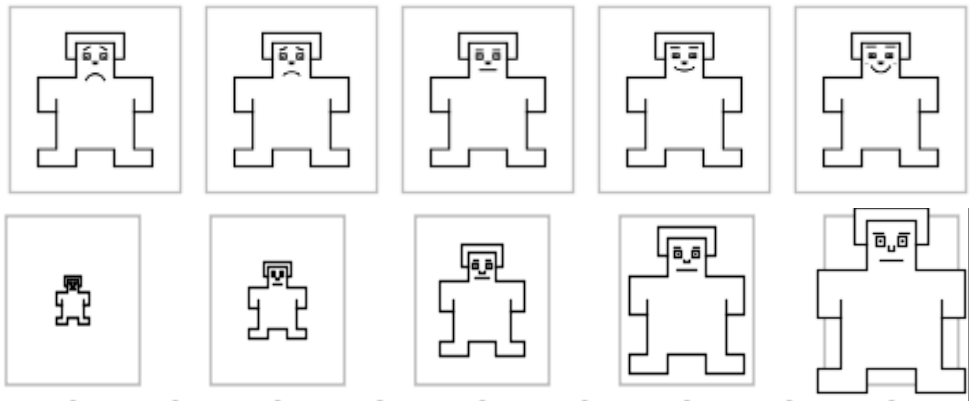
1. Ha_ _ _ (happy / handy, hasty)
2. Ang_ _ (anger, angry / angle, angel)
3. Ho _ _ (hope / home, hose)
4. Pla _ _ (plate, plane, plain)
5. Fu _ _ (fury / fume, full)
6. Go_ _ (good / gone, gold)
7. Tr_ _ _ (trust / trees, train)
8. Ba_ (bad / ban, bar, bay)

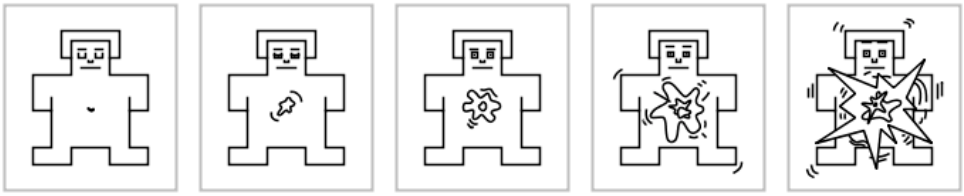
Q31: To what extent did the news articles you read make you feel one or several of the following emotions?

1. Disgusted
2. Surprised
3. Angry
4. Fearful
5. Outraged
6. Anxious
7. Enthusiastic
8. Proud
9. Hopeful
10. Guilty
11. Nervous
12. Happy
13. Sad
14. Unhappy

(1) Not at all – (7) very much

Q32: Please also use the following pictures to rate how you felt while reading the news articles. Please place the slider close to the picture that describes your reaction to reading the news articles best.





Q33: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
1. The articles I just read featured people living in the United Kingdom
2. The articles I just read featured people living in other European Union countries
3. The articles I just read featured people living in the United States
4. The articles I just read featured emotions such as anger and fury
5. The articles I just read featured emotions such as sadness and fear
6. The articles I just read featured emotions such as hope and enthusiasm
7. The three articles I read focused on the same topic
8. The three articles I read focused on different topics

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q34: Thinking back to the three news articles, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
1. The *FamilyGo* visiting scheme is a good idea
2. The *FamilyGo* visiting scheme should be extended
3. Visiting schemes, such as *FamilyGo*, are effective in improving conditions for elderly people living with their families
4. The increasing number of elderly citizens is one of the most important issues our country is facing today
5. The UK government should spend more money on care for the elderly
6. The European Union should invest in improving care for the elderly
7. The economic crisis in our country hit elderly people the hardest
8. When I think of the way society treats the elderly, I tend to feel guilty

(1) strongly disagree__ (7) strongly agree

Thinking back to the news articles you read, how may what you have read affect your future behaviour?

Q35: Do you think it makes you a lot less likely, a little bit less likely, neither more nor less likely, a little bit more likely or a lot more likely to …
1. …vote in the next general elections
2. …vote in the next European elections
3. …volunteer in a nearby nursing home
4. …donate money to a charity that supports older people
5. …seek more information about how elderly people live in this country
6. …try to save more money for your own retirement
7. …openly voice your own opinion about the situation of the elderly in this country
8. …be kinder to the people around you
9. …talk to family and friends about the situation of elderly people in this country
10. …help out an elderly neighbour, for example by going to the supermarket for them

1 – a lot less likely

2 – a little bit less likely
3 – neither more nor less likely
4 – a little bit more likely
5 – a lot more likely

Q36: When you are unhappy with the situation in our country, would you consider the following reactions?

9. Vote for one of the main parties which are not in power
10. Abstain in elections
11. Participate in a peaceful demonstration
12. Sign a petition
13. Vote for a radical or revolutionary party
14. Cast a blank vote
15. Participate in a violent demonstration
16. Leave the UK and move to another country
17. Join a political party
18. Join a pressure group or NGO
19. Create my own party
20. Other

1 – no, certainly not
2 – no probably not
3 – yes probably
4 – yes certainly

Q37: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the news articles you read were…

1. …informative
2. …raised important issues regarding the situation of the elderly in this country
3. …relevant to British citizens
4. …relevant to European Union citizens.

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q38: When you think of Parliament as an institution, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the competent decision
2. When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take the right decision
3. When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that Parliament would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q39: Now, think of the party you would be most likely to vote for in the next general election. Thinking of this party, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. When the country faces a technically complex challenge, I believe that this party would be likely to take the competent decision
2. When the country faces a morally difficult decision, I believe that this party would be likely to take the right decision
3. When the country faces a question on which many people may have different opinions, I believe that this party would be likely to take a decision that is close to my preferences

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q40: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. On the whole, I consider myself a European citizen
2. I feel closer to fellow Europeans than, say, to people from the USA or China
3. Europeans have certain values in common that make them closer together than they are to the rest of the world
4. I could not imagine myself ever living in another European country

Q41: Can you please tell us how strongly you identify with….:

1. Europe
2. The United Kingdom
3. Your region
4. Your town or village

(1) – not strongly at all __ (7) very strongly

Q42: If you think of what sometimes goes wrong in our country, to what extent do you think that the following are usually responsible:

1. Our institutional system
2. The European Union
3. Our politicians
4. All of us, the people
5. Other countries
6. Companies
7. Bankers
8. Foreigners
9. Associations and pressure groups
10. Other (open ended)

(1) Not responsible at all
(2) Not really responsible

(3) Somewhat responsible
(4) Highly responsible

Q43: Please indicate how much you trust each of the following institutions to usually take the right decisions:

1. The British Government
2. The British Parliament
3. The European Parliament
4. The European Commission

(1) Do not trust at all __ (7) Have complete trust

Q44: To what extent are you satisfied with the way democracy works in the European Union?
(1) Very dissatisfied __ (7) Very satisfied

Q45: To what extent are you satisfied with the way democracy works in the United Kingdom?
(1) Very dissatisfied __ (7) Very satisfied

Q46: Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. Media report the news balanced and fair
2. Media help society solving its problems
3. Journalists care more about selling their story than being accurate in reporting the story
4. The media can be trusted

(1) strongly disagree __ (7) strongly agree

Q47: Thinking back of the three news articles you read earlier, please write down in one sentence what you still remember of the articles:

__ *Open Ended*

**** Thank you! ****